REVOLUTIONARY DAYS



Princess Cantacuzène, Countess Spéransky, née Grant

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RECOLLECTIONS OF ROMANOFFS AND BOLSHEVIKI
1914—1917

BY

PRINCESS CANTACUZÈNE
COUNTESS SPÉRANSKY, *NÉE* GRANT

ILLUSTRATED FROM PHOTOGRAPHS



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TO

MY HUSBAND

THIS MODEST TALE OF OUR ADVENTURES

IS DEDICATED

A WORD TO THE READER

These pages merely contain my personal recollections of what occurred around me from the beginning of the war until our departure from home. There is no pretense to literary merit, and I do not aspire to present one political party in a more advantageous light than I do the others. In each group I noticed many a loyal patriot trying to stem the fatal flood; and everywhere there was much suffering.

Recent Russian history has been so startling, and so weighted with importance for us, that all I saw and heard fixed itself in my mind. I venture, therefore, to believe I have made few, if any, mis-statements; though I have had no documents at hand to use for verifying what I wrote.

One or two tales, such as the account of the Empress's arrest, came to me in a round-about way; but nearly everything I have described either happened in my presence and my neighborhood or was told me by some one of the people who took part in the scene. I have endeavored to repeat exactly and simply all such information.

Originally I intended to write only for my children; but I was tempted to publish, at the suggestion of a few friends, and by the generous offer of space in *The Saturday Evening Post* for a series of articles which appeared recently. They are in part reproduced here by the courtesy of that distinguished journal.

A Word to the Reader

I am glad to take this occasion to thank those who helped me by their kind interest; most especially Mr. George H. Lorimer, Editor of *The Saturday Evening Post;* also to say that I have been deeply touched by the many beautiful letters which have come to me from both my Russian and American compatriots, who found time to read and to praise my very modest work. Because of this I have felt encouraged to present to the public this volume.

THE AUTHOR.

"The Acasias," Sarasota, Florida.
January, 1919.

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REVOLUTIONARY DAYS

CHAPTER I

THE KNELL OF AUTOCRACY

For July 25, 1914, Saturday evening, a gala performance of the Imperial ballet was " commanded " in the quaint theater of our military camp at Kracnoe-Celo. By the Russian-Greek calendar it was July 12, but for the convenience of my readers I have translated the dating throughout this book to conform with Western practice. Since the time of the great Peter, the guard regiments of Russian autocrats have summered here; and this night, for the last event of the season, the pretty playhouse and garden were illuminated and decorated with flags: our own and the French. The latter were a remaining tribute to our allies, who had left us a few days previously after a lengthy visit. We had fêted them with enthusiasm, offering them dinners, parades, theatricals and races. There had been manoeuvers also; while with speeches and conferences the serious business was done, leaving each party delighted with the other. Satisfaction in the past, hope for the future, showed on all faces, now that Poincaré and the brilliant Viviani were on their homeward route across the Northern Sea; and we breathed easily in the sense of relaxation from cere-

monious functions. We expected this evening to be one of unalloyed, informal pleasure.

A few friends dined at our camp-cottage; and in the party some diplomats, come down from town, brought us the unexpected news — which we called "sensational and exaggerated" — of an agitated stock exchange, an anxious Foreign Office, complications with Vienna, and a possible crisis that might mean war. This set us all speculating, though we treated the subject with only passive interest. Troubles with Vienna were chronic; and we had been on the verge of war a dozen times. We even felt humiliation, remembering how some years before we had been obliged to swallow the insult of the Bosnia and Herzegovina annexation by Austria, without a gesture of protest. After dinner my husband, who had been on the point of starting for a business trip to our estates, gave up his plan and his leave of absence, and joined our party for the theater. This was the first indication I saw that he regarded the table-talk with any seriousness; though even now he gave only his curiosity as a reason for deferring his trip, by way of explanation to our guests.

As we reached the theater, laughter and pretty clothes were our first impression, and we found the usual gay groups of officers, court functionaries and women standing about on the wide piazzas. Only, to-night faces were more excited than ordinarily, and discussions more animated. All the conversations were on the same new subject that had occupied our thoughts since dinner. Here, too, had come the visitors from town with their gossip.

The bell rang and interrupted comment, and we entered to find our places, and to stand near them until

the Emperor came in, followed by his court and the functionaries of the camp on duty; at their head the Grand Duke Nicolas Nicolaïovitch, commander of the Imperial Guard and of the camp. Amid a great noise of spurs and sabres, the Sovereign having seated himself, with the Grand Duke on his left, the whole house did likewise. The orchestra played its best under the Imperial eye, and the curtain rose at once on one of the favorite fairy-tale ballets, of which we Russians never tire.

The Emperor looked pleased and at rest, and seemed really to enjoy the scene before him. He loved to get away from forms and ceremonies; and this night, in the simple surroundings of our military camp, his shyness found relief from the duties connected with his rank. The effort of the French visit was ended, and the face I saw — when from time to time it was turned towards his splendid neighbor — bore no trace or shadow of anxiety for the future.

It would be difficult to find two faces more completely contrasted than those of the two Nicolas Romanoffs — our Emperor and his second cousin. The latter, in the small, stocky form beside him, evidently saw not only the person of a revered Sovereign, but also the embodiment of ideals of which he had made a second religion. As I looked at the two, the childish, charming appeal for sympathy with his pleasure, expressed in the eyes and smile of the younger man, and the answering gleam of devotion and respect in the proud old face, struck me forcibly.

Quite evidently the political news we had heard had not yet reached the Sovereign's ear, or else had not

impressed him, for his brow showed no trace of preoccupation other than that of interest in and appreciation of the pretty "ballerines," who danced and posed for his approval. In the light of later events, I am inclined to think this act of ballet was the last hour of careless enjoyment our Emperor ever knew; and I am glad the deep preoccupation, which at that moment clouded his companion's distinguished features, seemed not to strike the younger man. Afterwards I learned that Cantacuzène's trip had been given up at a telephoned word from the Grand Duke, who all that afternoon had been following the international news with keen realization of its weight.

Towards the end of the first act, a slight movement marked the arrival of M. Sazonoff, Minister of Foreign Affairs, who quietly joined his colleagues in the front of the audience. It was so unusual for a member of the cabinet to be late when the Sovereign was present at a fête, that it at once set us whispering, and gave color to the reports of the early evening; especially as the man looked weary, and was quite evidently consulting with his neighbors on either side. All three were oblivious of the scenery and motions of the ballet. The act ended; everyone rose; and the Emperor, recognizing a face here and there, left the hall, which at once emptied itself on to the piazzas.

More curious than ever was the crowd; and when, after a few moments' conversation with Sazonoff, the Emperor ordered out his motors, and the whole cabinet followed his Majesty to the small palace he occupied in camp, we had reached the bursting point of excitement. All the diplomats present felt they wanted to

return to town and send cipher messages to their capitals; and the military element became intensely anxious to leave our frivolous surroundings, and to spend the night at offices and barracks, in case orders must be received or given suddenly. So we departed from the building, where, alas, there will never again be such a meeting. What happened to the poor "ballerines" I have no idea; but I fancy they must have finished their performance to an empty house, and pined over their lost opportunity of winning Imperial favor.

The news Sazonoff gave the Emperor was of so serious a nature that a council of ministers was called at once, the Sovereign presiding in person. There it was decided what line of conduct the Foreign Minister was to take; to what extent he could count on being seconded by the Departments of the Army and Navy; and what was the condition of those two arms of the government in case war came. Also, how the Minister of Finance would supply the necessary funds. The council lasted late into the night, and was of immense historical importance. It left a feeling of confidence between the Sovereign and those who formed his government. I was told, by two of the ministers, how shocked the Emperor was; and that he showed deep patriotism in his remarks. Sazonoff took courage from the promise of support, though he was put under orders to avert the catastrophe if possible, and this last command was in conformity with his own personal feelings and desires.

That night few slept in the cottages, barracks, tents and officers' messrooms scattered over the hills of Kracnoe camp. Hearts were too heavy, and anxiety

was too keen, as we sat or lay awake, waiting for the ringing of our telephones. In the small hours of the morning the summons came — orders to move all our regiments to their winter quarters, in the capital or its environs, wherever they belonged, as a mobilization might be called for in a few days. Our own unit, the "Chevaliers Guards of Her Majesty the Empress Mother," was to leave first, at nine that same morning, it being the ranking regiment; but it was immediately to be followed by other cavalry, then the infantry and artillery regiments and batteries, till the whole busy camp should be turned into a vacant plain in unbelievably short time. Through the few days and nights I lingered on in our home, I was never free again from the monotonous tramp of hoofs and feet past my garden gate. The troops moved in a continuous stream down the high-road to St. Petersburg; and this sinister procession was silent and orderly. It contained the flower of our empire, fifty thousand strong; those who would be the first to go out to the sacrifice, if war were declared! I carried about with me an insurmountable depression; and tore myself with deep regret from the garden and cottage, which had been our summer resort for many years. Not so the men, keen for the fray, and hoping this time we should not be led into giving way to German arrogance.

For two or three days there was some uncertainty, and the chance or hope of a peaceful solution. There was as yet no mobilization — to the intense chagrin of the officers I saw, who claimed that we should be far behind Germany in preparation for the struggle. However, on Wednesday the twenty-ninth, Sazonoff seemed despairing of any further possibility of a peace-

ful issue, and mobilization was ordered, with the additional warning that our regiments must be ready at once, because they were the first named to go to the front in case of war being declared.

I shall never forget the stress and strain of those few days, from the twenty-sixth till the twenty-ninth of July. Disturbances and strikes were feared and predicted in the capital, where German agents were arrested, and German money was found and confiscated among our factory workmen! Yet during this time the German Embassy remained with us, talking and negotiating; gaining time for themselves, and accusing us of having mobilized. All St. Petersburg lived in a state of indescribable nervous tension; and gossip said the pressure brought on the Emperor by certain court influences against war was so heavy that perhaps his Majesty would still be persuaded not to uphold our fine Slav policy of defending Serbia. During a week various parties talked, recommending this or that policy, but nearly all felt that the time had come when we must fight, or lower our standards. After lingering over discussions until Friday, the thirty-first, Germany's ultimatum was presented by old Count Pourtalès. He was so agitated that he made several mistakes in the papers he was to hand Sazonoff; and the latter preserved, and showed to various people as a curiousity, two contradictory documents written on opposite pages of the same sheet of paper, one of which the ambassador was too disturbed to notice and destroy.

Pourtalès was greatly distressed and surprised at our negative reply to his country's ultimatum. The old ambassador was a most charming man, and showed

himself always a true friend to Russia. While he was kept in his post by a government anxious to mask its dishonest work, he had near him as "counselor" of his embassy, von Lucius, who was the real agent, in direct communication with Berlin and the Emperor William, placed as a spy on his own ambassador. Pourtalès knew this towards the end, and suffered much from the system, of which he often complained; as well as of the fact, that his recommending a course was generally sufficient reason for von Lucius to recommend another. . . . From the time war was declared, von Lucius was at the head of the German spy organization, with headquarters at Stockholm; and he conducted all the German revolutionary propaganda in Russia, in league with the Bolsheviki.

Pourtalès regretted deeply the trend of his country's action and the breaking off of relations; whereas his secretaries — von Lucius at their head — were most inflammatory. It was reported by the person to whom she said it, that the Countess Pourtalès, who had made a somewhat unsuccessful bid for the popularity with St. Petersburg society, had vowed in leaving her embassy, that "within a few weeks, no two stones of our city should stand one upon the other, and that the German armies would take the place and burn it." The other members of the embassy had not been greatly liked in our usually kindly circle; but the old count's charm and culture had won esteem, and, even in the haste of his departure, the hospitality of the Hermitage Museum was offered him for his valuable collections of Greek antiquities. The offer was refused from an excess of discretion on the part of the

count, and a few days later this was deeply regretted by his many friends in St. Petersburg

To us of the military element the week from the twenty-fifth of July to the first of August was a time full of change and excitement, hard work and anxiety. My husband, at the first talk of war, had given up his leave on the Grand Duke's suggestion. Then within twenty-four hours he had seen his Chief and had a long heart-to-heart talk with him, begging to be set free, entirely and definitely, from his duties as aid-de-camp to his Imperial Highness; asking permission, instead, to go under fire with his old regiment, the Chevaliers Guards. The Chief listened to my husband with his usual kindly interest. Seven years this aid-de-camp had been constantly near him, abroad and at home. Through the hard period of the revolutionary days, when in 1905 the Grand Duke took over the command of St. Petersburg, quelled the troubles and brought order out of a chaos that had menaced the Imperial throne, my husband served him. Also, during the brilliant days that followed, when the Emperor had delighted to honor his cousin, and when the Grand Duke's place in Russia had been unique, he had always shown my husband the most generous understanding and confidence; had given him a filial place in his household, calling him familiarly "Mishka," and using with him always the "thou" of affection. He counted on Cantacuzène for various kinds of work of a delicate nature, charged him often with difficult missions, and accepted, as if with grateful recognition, the sincere devotion and loyal service my husband offered him.

So we felt that perhaps his desire to leave the Grand Ducal court at this moment might be subject to misinterpretation, but Michael's mind was set at rest immediately. The splendid old Chief showed himself greatly touched and pleased with "Mishka's" point of view, and replied that not only did he entirely sympathize with my husband, and would grant his desire, but, if he had been in his shoes, he would have wished to act in the same way; and he envied extremely the possibilities his aid-de-camp would have. He added his wishes for success, and said he would watch my husband's career with pleasure and interest, and be ready to help him at any time. The Grand Duke announced he hoped very much to reach the front soon himself, and as his present command, being mobilized, would be taken from him, he had asked the Emperor to give him another corps of cavalry on the firing line. Michael had naturally thanked his Chief warmly, and the latter embraced him and blessed him paternally, calling in the Grand Duchess, who gave my husband the same cordial God-speed, and a tiny ikon to protect him from danger.

When he returned home, Michael was radiant from the spirit shown him in this interview. It was the only difficulty to overcome; for the old regiment hailed with delight the idea of having an ancient comrade in its midst as a junior colonel. But he was considered somewhat crazy to leave his easy, safe and brilliant berth at court, to chance rough life at the front.

After this Michael moved instantly to the regimental quarters in town, and because he feared for us at the deserted camp, I packed and moved with the children to the Orloffs' villa at Strelna, where their kind and

hospitable thought had called me in the first moment of excitement. This arrangement had the double advantage of keeping my little people in the country surroundings, good for them, and yet bringing us considerably nearer the capital.

Our servants did the packing and closing of the camp home with utmost rapidity, and they displayed a touching intention to save me trouble and serve me faithfully. Day and night they worked without orders or superintendence, and when I went to see results, I found my household had given me support of immense value.

With the home and children no longer on my mind, I gave all my attention to the long shopping expeditions, necessary to turn a "manoeuvering kit" into an outfit for serious war. Business consultations and arrangements also filled our time in town.

Brave and brilliant days flew past all too rapidly, though they were hard to live. The city was covered with flags and draperies, and streets and shops were crowded with groups, soon to break up. Stores of everything useful for war were soon bought out, and friends stood about on sidewalks or near counters making exchanges, giving advice or trying to render some little service to those who were going away. When evening fell, one saw the same people in lighter mood and dress gathering in the overflowing restaurants. Especially Contant's and Donon's, established in ancient palaces, and offering the charming frame of their old gardens full of great trees, and flowers, and fountains, became favorite resting places to habitués. Our choice was Donon's, and there long tables were spread beneath the branches, which were occupied

regularly by the same groups of officers — among them many of our Chevalier Guard comrades. In "kiosks" large round tables accommodated family groups, where young heroes in khaki were the center of attention; while they made merry, before the final good-bys. In quieter corners, amid blossoms and shrubbery, tables for two were set, and at these one saw couples taking an hour's tête-à-tête; husbands and wives, mothers and sons, or merely friends who were sad at parting. The men were in campaign uniforms, and the women smiled though tears stood in many eyes! There were tables with young diplomats, popular Allies come to retail the news of their countries and glean our gossip; and, as nearly everyone knew everyone else, there was much wandering and visiting, talking and laughter. Now and then, came some German or Austrian representative, but they felt chilled, and ate their meals in silence on the balcony, or in the abandoned dining rooms. It was a time of gentle twilight, lingering conversations, and caressing music, played by gypsies, who knew their clients' tastes; and we all sat late into the night, being Russians; also, because we tried to hold on to our happy hours, which we knew were fast ebbing away. Sazonoff, with his secretaries and aids, came from their work in the palace of the Foreign Office, across the square, to snatch a little food, and a few moments of rest at odd hours. Their faces were pale with fatigue, and the minister himself showed wear from day to day under the frightful strain of responsibility. To the last moment he was admirably calm, hopeful and unsensational. His dispatches during that time are now historical documents of current knowledge, and they prove how he

strove to avoid bloodshed, while holding high the banner of our national honor. We who were with him during the experience learned to esteem him vastly for this noble work under most trying conditions, for he had just come through a long illness and a most serious operation, and had been told by his doctors the stress of public life would be very harmful to him.

Saturday morning, August first, I woke to read in the paper that the die was cast. War was declared!

My husband would be going in a few days, and behind him stretched to the very horizon of my realization the faces of all the friends I had made in twenty years, headed in the same direction. A terrible road of privation and suffering we must stumble along for an unknown period of time!

I was struck anew each time I went out in Russia by the order at large gatherings. There was always plenty of space and time, not to mention proverbial good-nature; and these qualities gave a Russian ceremony a note of charm and distinction all its own. The day set for a service of prayer in the Winter Palace was no exception. The ten or fifteen great reception halls were already filled with people holding gentle conversation when I arrived — old men in court uniforms, young ones in fighters' khaki, women in light gowns and pretty summer hats. They all looked tremendously tense and alive, as if gathering up their strength to offer it collectively to their Ruler. It must have given the Sovereign pleasure to see all that mass of Russians, so seriously coming to him in the hour of need.

We entered the Nicolas Hall, where the Imperial

cortège had already taken its place, down at the end, near an altar. The room's immense dimensions — it was built to contain comfortably three thousand people at a ball — held an imposing concourse of the cream of Russia's people. For this occasion, there were standing here the members of the Romanoff family, and their numerous suites, the court and government officials, all the aristocracy within a large radius, and the officers of the Imperial bodyguard regiments. In broad daylight, the sun streaming through the great window took all artifice of appearance and manner from the high-bred crowd; and it was different from that seen at the court balls of ancient times. Now we were simplified to our primitive traits, and nothing but our warm national heart showed. Each man looked strained and exalted; no woman had dry eyes.

The religious ceremony was not long, but its intensity was extreme; and never had the intoning of priest or the singing of choir been more lovely. Certainly, also, the prayer that went up to heaven was profoundly sincere. As it ended, and we rose from our knees, the Sovereigns turned, and stood a moment facing their subjects; the Empress taking her husband's arm. Quite spontaneously, from five thousand throats broke forth the national anthem; which was not less beautiful because the voices choked with emotion. Then cheer upon cheer came, till the walls rang with their echo!

It was the first time, I fancy, the Emperor had been offered such a tribute. He was paler than usual, and seemed somewhat startled but not displeased. He advanced with the Empress still upon his arm, and con-

tinuing its mighty cheers, the crowd parted in front of them, forming an aisle from the altar to the immense double doors opposite. I chanced by this separation of the people, to be in the first row of those the Sovereigns would pass; and I watched them with interested sympathy. As they progressed, those who could not see well pressed forward, and the lines on each side became somewhat irregular. General Woyeikoff, Commandant of the palace, always quick to be officious, rushed forward to reinforce the Grand Master of Ceremonies and his aids, and he roughly pushed back men and women into their places, saying, " Space must be left clear! " It was the Empress who gently stopped him; and it was she who seemed best to understand the movement towards her husband, and to welcome it. Woyeikoff returned to his position in the procession, among the Imperial household, and the Sovereigns continued down the room, the crowd gone wild with love for them. Old men and young, red in the face and hoarse from the effort, kept up the noise. They, and the women too, bowed low, or threw themselves upon their knees, as their Rulers passed: his Majesty, in absolute silence, showed no recognition of any special face. Our beautiful Empress looking like a Madonna of Sorrows, with tears on her cheeks, stretched her hand in passing to this or that person, now and then bending gracefully to embrace some woman who was kissing her hand. Her Majesty that day seemed to symbolize all the tragedy and suffering that had come upon us; and, feeling it deeply, to give thanks to this group for the devotion their attitude implied. Her expression was of extraordinary sweetness and distress, and possessed beauty of a quality

I had never seen before on the proud classic face. Everyone was moved by her Majesty's manner in a moment when she must be tortured by thoughts and memories of her old home. In passing me she stretched out her hand, and as I put my lips to it, she leaned over, kissed me and said, " Your husband too? " and continued, in reply to my affirmative, " Then you must help me with all the work there is for us women to do." I cannot forget the beautiful, touching Madonna of that day, stooping to console and encourage her people, drowning her own sorrows in her tears of sympathy for her subjects! Till then through fifteen years, I had seen only a statuesque and austere presence, presiding at feasts and ceremonies, with an almost inhuman severity of expression; and entirely repressing the tenderness this situation had brought out.

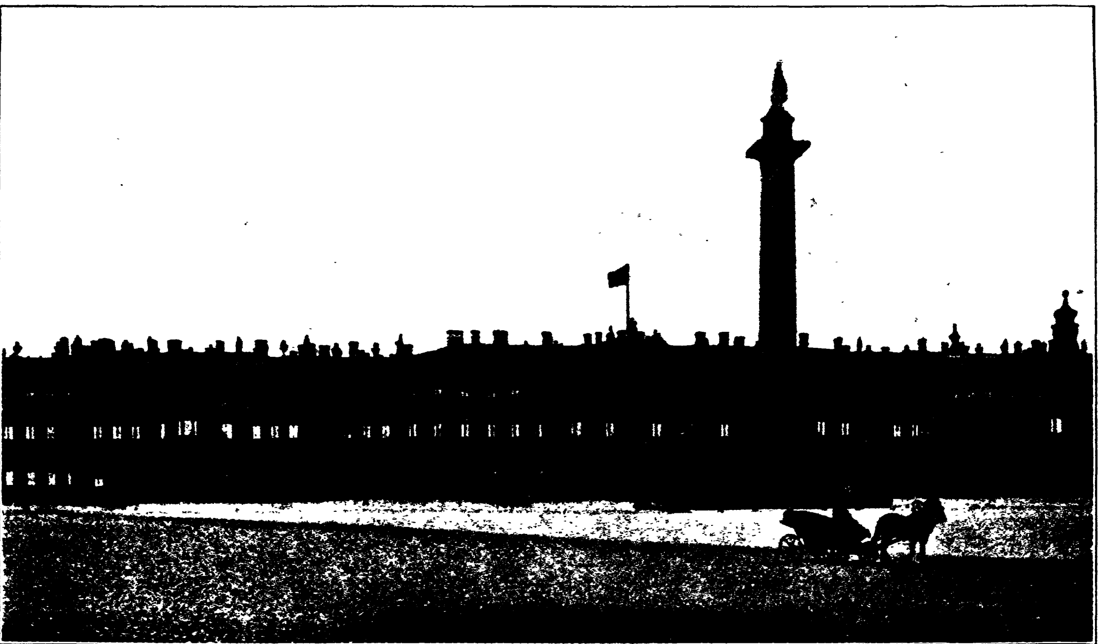
From the Nicolas Hall the procession of the Imperial family passed through long suites of state reception rooms in its progress to the hall, from which a balcony overlooks the Palace Place. As they went by, I saw that several members of the Imperial family had been greatly moved. The poor Grand Duchess Marie Pavlovna, widow of the Grand Duke Vladimir, had wept copiously, but held herself as always with dignity and spoke here and there to friends in the crowd whom she knew to be unhappy, embracing them, or saying a kind word. The Grand Duchess Anastasia Nicolaïevna, wife of the Grand Duke Nicolas, showed affectionate solicitude to those whom she felt would especially be sufferers. The Grand Duke Nicolas Nicolaïovitch was the observed of all observers. He

had been told that morning he was to be intrusted with the supreme command of all the Russian Armies! He had neither asked nor hoped for so great an honor and his gratitude and emotion enhanced his intense personality, till he dominated the surrounding throng completely. One seemed to *feel* him in the room, where his immense height put him head and shoulders above the tallest of the guard officers. He stood straight as an arrow, and walked with the graceful elastic stride of one in good training. This, with his admirable proportions, kept him still young in spite of years. He was intensely pale beneath his tan, and the small classic head was thrown back nobly. His distinction and physical beauty had won admiration from both men and women for years, and one felt they partly explained the enthusiasm which troops and populace always showed whenever he appeared before them. He was to everyone the ideal leader in an emergency. "An Imperial eagle," said some one in the crowd, as he passed; and really the name suited the proud figure well. We turned to him, with gratitude that the conduct of our armies was to be in his good hands, and as he realized the sentiment expressed, his appreciation showed in his flashing looks, and in the sudden beauty of his rare smile.

I was told from a sure source that in accepting his appointment that morning, he had begged two favors from his Imperial cousin: First, to go to the front quietly and without official leave-takings, avoiding the noise that had attended General Kuropatkin's departure for Manchuria ten years before. This request was granted; but not so the second, which was

that he might name his own staff. General Ianouschkevitch was already nominated as his chief of staff, he was informed; and General Daniloff was to be the chief of his Military Bureaus. Both these were supposedly friends to Soukhomlinoff; and at headquarters the Chief was allowed to choose only his personal staff, and not his military one. This measure struck everyone (except the generalissimo himself) as dreadfully unfair, since he must work with these men as instruments, and be responsible for their acts. In it those devoted to the Grand Duke felt a first move of his hidden enemies.

I followed the Imperial family on the lengthy walk to the far side of the palace. Once there, I approached a window, from which I saw not only the square below, but the balcony where the Emperor and Empress stood without attendants. They looked small and lonesome against the mountainous rich façade of the construction, and they gazed down in silence upon a most amazing sight. . . . Below, in the Palace Place, of which few in the world are so large and splendid, a sea of raised faces filled the entire space. Societies were there, with flags and emblems; young students in uniforms of schools and universities; old men and women, children and priests, soldiers and workmen of various degree. All were prepared for the terrible future the war would bring them; yet they were present without a call, spread out at their Ruler's feet, come to offer humbly their homage and their lives. As the Emperor appeared, this crowd had fallen on its knees, their flags dipped in salute; and they burst forth in a great chorus — the Imperial anthem! Here in the street the lowly people equaled in their



Part of the Winter Palace and the Balcony where the Emperor and Empress showed themselves to the people on August 1, 1914

show of faithfulness the nobles' tribute of an hour ago inside the palace.

Did the Emperor remember, as he gazed on them, that ten years before a crowd on this same spot seemed sufficiently threatening to his throne, for him to order it to be dispersed — with cavalry? Did he remember, that their attitude had then drawn from him the concession of a parliament; and that his promises made then of other reforms besides had not yet been carried out? That he, for security, and because he disliked his capital, and its citizens, had not again occupied since then the great city palace? Was all this in his mind, as he stood there with bowed head? Did he forgive and admire the spirit his people now showed? I turned, and a number of eyes I looked into were filled with tears. . . . A hardened old military man said gently, "See how devoted and serious they are; and how they pity their Emperor, and wish to help him!" "The Emperor holds trump cards in the great game he must play," said another. "His people have brought him their gift of loyalty to-day; and his proud aristocracy, as well as his poor peasants, are of one piece in this!"

At this same hour William, in Berlin, was making speeches to the multitude in front of his palace, trying to inflame their patriotism by his eloquence; but Nicolas stood before his subjects without a word or gesture; and they knelt in adoration to the "White Czar" of history, and gave him thus the greatest hour of his life!

The Imperial couple left the balcony and returned to their private apartments, while the concourse, indoors and out, dispersed; but the exaltation of these

wonderful scenes remained with us, a memory to return in camp and trench, or in abandoned homes, at lonely hours, comforting the martyrdom of those who were so brave and true.

CHAPTER II

FIRST DAYS OF WAR

From the morning of the third of August — Monday — began the distress of partings for us, with the departure of my brother-in-law, Count Théo Niroth, commanding the Dragoons of the Imperial Guard. Knowing poor Théo to be living through his troubles alone, I motored to his barracks at Peterhof that morning early, to say good-by to him, and see if I could be of any use. I found him very occupied and entirely calm, while his regiment seemed well in hand, officers and men going about their unusual business of packing and entraining, with the utmost order and rapidity. Théo was greatly distressed not to embrace his family before leaving. The war had come so suddenly, that though he had wired them he could scarcely hope to see anyone arrive from the faraway country estates. As I was making my adieu, his wife, having made a forced voyage, with great good luck appeared at Peterhof an hour before the Dragoons departed. So at least of her he had a glimpse; and said good-by.

Our Chevaliers Guards were to leave the following morning; and Monday there was a most touching function, when in the court-yard of their old historical barracks, the regiment in battle-array was reviewed by its commander (Prince Alexander Dolgorouky) and all its ancient or retired officers then in St. Peters-

burg. The senior ex-commander of the regiment said a few heartfelt words of good wishes from those too old to go to war; then squadron by squadron the men, with their officers, knelt and were blessed by the regimental priest. All the wives and mothers who could possibly come, were taking their last look at the assembled regiment. It was scarcely to be recognized in its rough khaki as the same unit we knew in pure white, or red-and-silver uniforms, of old gala days. Less brilliant now were the men, dressed for their grim work; but in size and strength as well as moral fibre, they still were the first regiment of the land. We women and the "ancients" stood on one side of the altar, those going to the sacrifice on the other, while the priest read out a short service, and tried to inspire us with courage, each to face our fate. Then we knelt together in the dust for a last prayer.

As they were to leave at daylight next morning, we had but a few hours for preparations, and no time to think. Numerous officers were obliged to go without seeing their people, scattered in the provinces or abroad by the summer season; and the few women lucky enough to be in town were multiplying their care, looking after comrades who were alone in this hour of need. Baskets were prepared with food, literature and small comforts, which might help out the tedious hours of a long trip on a military train.

Our little girls came up from Strelna to lunch with us that day, and to say good-by to their father. We tried to make the parting as easy as possible for them, so their young minds would not be weighted with the tragedy we elders were living.

Our boy remained the night in town with me, and

had his first experience of real drama. At five a. m. we rose, and went to the railway, where we saw the beloved regiment, in the midst of which we had lived so many years, entrain. Perfect order prevailed, but the embarkation took several hours. Each squadron occupied a train: freight cars, fitted up for soldiers and horses; platform-cars for baggage and provisions; and at the end a car or two, second-class and far from clean, for the officers, doctors, papers, etc. A most curious sight was the horses belonging to the regimental band. It was a tradition that though the other soldiers were all mounted on bay horses, the band should ride pure white steeds. With the new ideas of warfare, these animals became a danger to their unit, and they had been dyed for safety in olive-brown. This was their first appearance in their disguise; and their comrades of the four squadrons did not recognize them. There was a dreadful fuss, and such desire to avoid the poor, painted creatures that the latter felt insulted; and regarding themselves as victims of a ridiculous mistake, they lost no opportunity of protesting. Their humiliation turned them timid and fractious, and it took time and persuasion to get them into their cars. Everyone rushed to help; and officers as well as soldiers were amused at the result of this first essay at "camouflage," which came as a diversion to our strained feelings.

With the actual parting, there was a general breakdown, hurried kisses, choking blessings; then a rush for the platforms. The trains moved off, and lonesome small groups of relatives faced the long days of anxiety and emptiness ahead! It seemed dreadful to see our men go! Besides my husband, these trains

contained many of our oldest friends, and we knew they would be put immediately under fire. At the last moment I had been charged with packets of valuables and with letters, and had promised to look after and send news to various families, unable to be with us on that sunny morning.

This day, and those immediately following, my time was taken up by the many commissions entrusted to my care. Still a few friends remained, who were making their adieu and leaving for the front to join regiments or staffs on special duty. There were Red Cross units pushing their preparations to start as soon as it was possible to organize. They greatly needed supplies of all kinds, nothing having been foreseen of the events that were upon us. In the capital itself, hundreds of hospitals were opening, governmental as well as private. A great need for pity and charity appealed to the country's womanhood; and one and all responded, giving of their riches in money, time, and personal labor.

There was a movement to rally about the Empress for direction in this; and many like myself, who had till then avoided Mme. Wiroboff, called upon her, knowing that for all the Imperial war work she was chosen by the Empress to represent her personally. Mme. Anna Alexandrovna Wiroboff had been named lady in waiting to the Empress and taken to live in the palace at the time of her début. She was the daughter of a poor and worthy gentleman at court, and it was by way of recognizing his long service that she was given this situation, and the small income attached to it. In looks she was very fat, with clumsy walk and figure, a pretty head, soft curly hair, blue eyes which

always looked sleepy, and fine complexion and teeth. She had no conversation, save to make compliments in a soft voice; and she posed for being very shy, sentimental and stupid. By this method she succeeded for years in allaying suspicions of her real ambition, and in covering her conduct. People said constantly, "Anna Alexandrovna cannot have done that; she is not clever enough for a successful intrigue." On entering upon her career, she at once adopted an attitude of abject flattery, which at first surprised, then pleased and touched the Empress. As time passed, her Majesty admitted the self-styled "slave" more and more to her presence. Court gossip said Mme. Wiroboff sat at her mistress' feet; kissed them; begged for the meanest tasks as an honor; and talked to the Empress in picturesque language of the Orient; addressing her as the "Sun and Moon," or her "Life;" and claiming she had been saved from dying during typhoid by the adored mistress's presence at her bedside . . .

About seven or eight years before the great war, Mme. Wiroboff had married, at the wish of her Majesty, a man the latter chose. Her husband was persuaded to leave his active service in the navy, and live at court, where he was given the position of aid-de-camp to the Emperor. To everyone's amazement, he insisted upon divorcing her after a few months, and left the court and his honors to return to sea. He never reappeared, and was dubbed mad for the story he told of his married life. After this episode, Mme. Wiroboff remained always with the Empress; was called simply "my friend" by the Sovereign; and became her favorite and confidential attendant. She was given an apartment in the palace, and also occupied at

times a small house rented outside, where she could entertain with freedom, and where her Imperial patroness was often asked to meet people, whom it would have been difficult to introduce at court. During this time the new favorite made advances to various women of society in our group, whom she considered desirable acquaintances; but though we all felt obliged to see her at the palace, and at the homes of such officials as were cultivating her to make their way, most of the women of good standing avoided her proffered intimacy. She resented this probably, but gave no sign; only representing to her Majesty that she was too absorbed in her service to wish for other occupations or interests. Later, however, she made the Empress feel she had sacrificed her husband and all her friends to her patroness; and the latter repaid this devotion by redoubled kindness. Soon the evident dislike shown by loyal subjects to the Wiroboff ways was explained by the favorite as covert criticism of the Empress's friends and tastes and occupations; and a very delicate situation was created. People felt disinclined to push into the charmed circle, not wanting to risk the ire of the new star, or her jealousy; not willing, either, to hold out a hand to her; and by various intrigues on her part, many of the best and most normal elements were eliminated from the Imperial circle, or kept at a distance. The Sovereign's mind was poisoned with a morbid belief in the hostile attitude of Russia's aristocratic society towards her; and thus more and more was she separated from healthy influences. About two years before the war, Rasputin was introduced at court by the favorite, and his ministrations to the Empress were encouraged, while a clique

of conspirators was formed to surround, flatter and keep in hand the Empress; but then they still had no political program.

When the war came, a number of women felt with me that nothing counted but our patriotic duties; and in a desire to make a demonstration of loyalty, we all called on Mme. Wiroboff, asking for any work in the various Red Cross organizations, which would be organized by her Majesty's orders. . . . From then on, it was impossible not to admit Mme. Wiroboff's influence on events. There were amiable smiles and messages on her lips, purporting to come from the lady's mistress. We were told by her that "her Majesty was suffering from one of her frequent attacks of nervous pains;" and all those wishing to help, were begged to join in the work at the Winter Palace, where the doors would be thrown open as they had been at the time of the Japanese war. In a few days, the papers announced all was ready at the palace; and the afternoon of opening there was a spectacle marvelous to see. A vast crowd of women presented themselves to the presiding committee, the members of which were ladies-in-waiting from the palace, with Mme. Wiroboff at their head. Wives of government and court officials, wives of officers, wives of simple soldiers, and work-girls from shops and dressmaking establishments were there, rubbing shoulders, all filled with zeal, making up in generosity and enthusiasm, what they sometimes lacked in science and experience.

The contributions in money, in materials and in medicines were so immense that it seemed quite unbelievable such riches could be put forth in so short a time. . . . It was a cause of great admiration to me

how quickly organization came out of chaos. Mme. Wiroboff herself was swamped with the difficulties; but women who had done this kind of work in the other war took hold at once, and the crowd of willing hands found their allotted employment as if by magic. Two or three halls were turned into a factory for surgical bandages, under professional teachers; other halls were packing rooms, or were installed to receive and store the gifts which poured in. Cutting rooms and sewing rooms were arranged, with machines and specialists to handle them. Everyone was ready to give all she could in time, money and good will, without any pretentions to recognition.

It was done to help the army, for which so little had been prepared, and to show to the Empress how her subjects upheld her. Daily we hoped she would appear, especially to thank the humbler element for their time and generous effort, which meant loss of money in their bread-winning lives; but as the weeks passed and her Majesty never came, the rumor spread she was entirely preoccupied with her own small private hospital, installed in the Tzarskoe Palace, and took no interest in the capital, leaving everything there to Mme. Wiroboff. The latter frequently showed lack of tact, and was pretentious with women much older than herself, and of more dignity. Discords broke out, in which the Empress's friend and Mme. Soukhomlinoff were the storm centers, and different camps were formed. Luckily, however, just as the affair was becoming dramatic, these two ladies discovered themselves needed elsewhere; Mme. Wiroboff retiring to Tzarskoe, to go into the hospital, where she seconded the Empress and began her political work, and Mme.

Soukhomlinoff founding a unit of her own and going to the front.

Immediately upon their departure, all the other elements settled down in perfect harmony. A half-dozen ladies, wives of court functionaries or of cabinet ministers, giving their whole hearts to the success of the enormous organization, carried out the good work for two and a half years. Peace reigned in the great halls, though neglect by their Imperial owner was felt and regretted; and owing to this, the poorer people by degrees drifted away, as well as some others who should naturally have remained attached to that particular group. These departures caused her Majesty great chagrin, I heard; and late in the year 1916 she made an effort to draw back some of the scattered elements. But it was too late. All had settled elsewhere and the early, beautiful, personal spirit had disappeared. Luckily our men at the front lost nothing, for the same supplies reached them through other channels.

During that first month of war, I was amazed at the extent and quality of the charities organized all over the country by our women. Their souls, talents and generosity went into supplementing the government, and supplying the soldiers with necessities the state could not give them. It was done with admirable system, and no one faltered till the revolution came, disorganizing transportation and the army, and making the work impossible. But in the beginning there was vast enthusiasm, and the dark future was not suspected. I found myself drawn into the stream, making and packing bandages like all my friends, while we talked of the daily news. The latter was most en-

couraging and gratifying to our national vanity. The campaign in East Prussia progressed rapidly; and we captured town after town; till our armies had advanced far on German soil.

Within a week of his nomination, the Commander-in-Chief had left for the front, without send-off or notice of any kind. His train had been made up in St. Petersburg, where the officers of his household and four personal aids went aboard. The Grand Duke had in no way augmented his household for the war, much to the regret of various men who had hoped to find easy berths in his train. These seekers were forced to look elsewhere, as the headquarters staff consisted of those named from above to do the military work of the offices, and the six or eight persons whom the Grand Duke had always previously kept near him. In the course of the year he was Commander-in-Chief, almost no new man was added to this group as his Imperial Highness disapproved of purely ornamental people, and wished to avoid the kind of surroundings that had been those of Kuropatkin. So the Grand Duke's train left St. Petersburg quietly, and made a stop at Peterhof station, where the principal passenger, his body servant, his Cossack and Doctor Malama climbed on board in silence. Then they started for Baranovitch. The military staff, already organized by General Ianoushkevitch, awaited them there, The Chief took complete and immediate possession of all the various personalities congregated at Baranovitch, never had the least trouble with them apparently, and absolutely ignored all evil intentions. He won the men composing his military staff so completely, that when, a year later, he was



Empress Alexandra in her Red Cross uniform

sent from the high place he had filled, General Ianoushkevitch went with him; and every member of his staff, to the last man in the offices, asked to do likewise. They showed him the most signal personal devotion in this, since to remain where they were, meant working under the Sovereign's eyes; while the Grand Duke was going into exile, disgraced and out of favor.

Life at headquarters under the Grand Duke was of the simplest. The Chief rose early, and spent a busy day at his work table, or in the military council chamber. Those who were on duty were immensely occupied, those off duty greatly bored, for no amusements were furnished them. Everyone personally attached to the Chief lived on one or the other of his two trains. Those whose energies were employed in the offices, lived near-by, in temporary buildings of the cheapest construction. The table fare was plain in the extreme, and so was the service, even when the Emperor, or a foreign mission, came to headquarters. The Grand Duke never took a day off, nor left Baranovitch, except for occasional and sudden trips of inspection to the front. No ladies were allowed at the staff, exception not being made even for the Grand Duchess. The Emperor finally asked, and obtained, towards Easter, permission from the Commander-in-Chief, for her to go there once, for a two days' stay; as her husband was the only man at headquarters, who in eight or nine months, had not had a single day's leave. He took no rest or recreation, save a short walk daily near his car — where his aids had arranged a small square garden — and an evening hour of conversation after dinner, with the foreign attachés and the members of his household; besides

this, the time required to write his wife a daily letter, which he never failed to do. His behavior, according to universal report, was always even, quiet and courteous; and in the severe strain and tension to which he was subjected, though often his face went gray from anxiety, his self-control never failed him for a moment. Gambling and cards were forbidden; and the younger members of the staff and foreign attachés thought it very dull at Baranovitch, and the Chief much too austere; though they all added that at meal hours, when they met him, he was altogether charming. Tales of this staff life came back to the capital, and there, and all over the country, made a fine, reassuring impression.

CHAPTER III

ADVISERS OF THE EMPEROR

In the early days of August, the Emperor and Empress, with their children and court, had moved from Peterhof Palace to Tzarskoe, as there was fear of the Germans bombarding our coast, where the former residence stands. For the same reason, and because of her many interests in Red Cross work, Princess Orloff moved to town also, bringing my children with her to her home there, and vacating Strelna. I was personally glad of this change, being very busy; for besides my afternoons in the palace bandage-factory, my mornings were spent in the throes of settling our newly bought house. In the conditions of that time, it was an appalling undertaking to arrange even so small a place. The workmen I counted upon were always being mobilized for war purposes, and my own servants had nearly all been taken. I had to resign myself to great waste of time and energy; but various friends came to my aid, and in spite of all complications I began to hope I might move into our new quarters towards the middle of August.

Thus life systematized itself around the house arranging, and the palace work, and my days flew; while each evening I returned to the Orloffs'. Here, there was invariably a group of interesting people, presided over by the most distinguished and charming of

women. Orloff himself divided his time between town, where he managed the Emperor's military bureaus, and the palace at Tzarskoe, where his duties as confidential secretary, informal adviser and faithful attendant to the Sovereign, gave him rather more occupation than fell to the lot of other men. During the first year of the war, Prince Vladimir Orloff reached the zenith of his power, and his brilliant reputation was well deserved. He had nothing to gain from Imperial favor, blessed as he was with position, fortune, palaces, collections and personal talents second to none in the great empire. Since the year when, under Alexander III, his dying father had left him a ward to the then Emperor, boy and man, Orloff had occupied a place in the sunshine of Imperial smiles. He was constantly at court under exceptional circumstances: first in the page corps, then in one of the bodyguard's crack regiments, afterwards aid-de-camp to the young Emperor Nicolas II. Soon the latter called Orloff altogether away from his military duties to court service, made him his secretary and his constant companion. After the revolution of 1905, in gratitude for the disinterested services Orloff had rendered, he was given a situation equaled by that of no one else. Confidential adviser and personal friend to his Majesty, he always gave the Emperor his honest opinion, and could be counted on for tact and intelligence, absolute discretion and loyalty to the throne and country. No honors or bribes could make the least difference to this man's honesty and high principle; and the Emperor showed him above all others unbounded faith and affection. Under Orloff's influence for years nearly all the kind and gracious acts

of his Majesty were thought of and carried out. Orloff's pen wrote many of the great messages and edicts of the period. Members of the court and of the Government surrounded him, begging him to present this or that measure to Imperial notice, in a happy moment. One of the ministers told me that to his mind Orloff was the greatest force for good in the Government though he occupied no cabinet place, because anyone wishing to put through a patriotic law was sure of his timely support, and any bad influence was downed by him with certainty, in private conversation. Previous to Mme. Wiroboff's success at court, the Empress had recognized Orloff's talents and virtues, and had greatly encouraged his intimacy with her husband. The Emperor loved him as he did the Grand Duke Nicolas, and leaned upon these two men in growing confidence. The Grand Duke and Orloff were friends, with frank esteem for one another; and Orloff saw in the Commander-in-Chief the strongest arm to protect the throne and serve it. He for his part gladly lent himself to all the missions, to and from the staff, handling negotiations so admirably, that confidence grew between the two great cousins and the game of the conspirators to oust the Grand Duke was for months constantly undone.

Naturally Mme. Wiroboff and her people wasted no love either on Orloff or on the Grand Duke, and Soukhomlinoff felt the same way, though I heard both him and the favorite speak to Orloff, and of the Chief, with cringing flattery. One felt their envy, but they were still negligible quantities in those early days and I even met the Soukhomlinoffs at the Orloff dinner table once. Mme. Soukhomlinoff had much ambition

to show herself an inmate of this salon, and did her best to attract the sympathies of those she met in the charmed circle, which was to her mind a rendezvous worth cultivating.

The Prime Minister, a dear old gentleman nearly eighty, very ancient in ideas and traditions, but patriotic and devoted to his Emperor, was Orloff's warm admirer. He and his wife, Mme. Gorymékin, dined frequently at the hospitable board. There was Krivashène also, the brilliant Minister of Agriculture, author of several reforms in land division among the peasantry, which had been most helpful to the country. He stood for all that was liberal, and wanted our government to move forward in joint understanding with the Duma; and he was spoken of as a rival and successor to old Gorymékin, if the Sovereign should inaugurate a liberal policy. He also was a man of fine reputation, and a friend to Orloff. Bark, the self-made Minister of Finance, was young and strong, with great things prophesied for his future by Krivaschène, his sponsor in the cabinet. At forty-five, Bark was an element to be reckoned with; liberal in his views, desiring the development and education of the people and their welfare. His devotion to the Emperor was profound and sincere, and of the same beautiful quality as Orloff's own; and they showed one another sympathy and mutual understanding. Bark at this moment wore a halo in our eyes, for his encouragement of the Emperor's edict suppressing the sale of alcohol, which as a government monopoly had brought seven hundred million rubles into the treasury annually, since Witte's time. And this was deducted from our revenues at the moment we entered upon the great war. It spoke

well for the nerve of the Minister of Finance, someone said, to dare such a stroke just then for an ideal. Sazonoff was of this group, and Orloff's intimate; and as I had greatly admired and liked him always, I enjoyed his presence among us exceedingly. There were many more men, with the military element well represented. Officers, simply friends, found their way to this sheltered corner for a farewell dinner before going to the front, or a welcoming one when they returned on military business. Also, there were many who came to ask Orloff's help, in one way or another.

Women — young, pretty, old and clever — were of these informal parties, bringing the charm of their presence, with their sewing or knitting, to the fêtes. Dignity and quiet were the order of the day; and brilliant talk, from the "lions" present, was as much the rule as the afternoon dress worn by all. Frequently the men gathered in small groups in one or another of the many salons; and questions of world interest were settled in comfortable arm chairs.

I loved St. Petersburg in those fine first weeks of war; and admired my compatriots as never before. In the streets everyone hurried, everyone was busy, and autos, houses and women wore the sign of the Red Cross. The humbler elements especially were touching, and each poor shop readily sold things "for the soldiers" at a discount, just as each poor work girl gave of her strength in the good cause. The rich were vastly generous; not only their money, but their time and thought, palaces and motors, filled out and completed the omissions, in the government's care for its sons.

Then one evening the weight of a hammer blow

fell on us. The offensive in East Prussia had continued brilliantly, and the thrilling news of daily progress had kept us women in high spirits. Were not the troops engaged, our very own, of the Imperial Guard; and had we not a right to bask, therefore, in our men's reflected glory? A day came when, in the taking of Kauschen on the nineteenth of August, the Chevalier Guards and the Horse Guard Regiment suffered losses, which carried anguish with the tale of triumph to mothers and wives in the capital. So many officers and soldiers were killed; and the list of wounded was enormous too!

My husband had led the three squadrons of his regiment who, dismounted, had attacked in a charge the fortification on one side, and at the beginning of the movement he had been shot through the liver. He had not wanted to give over the command in so grave a crisis, and had continued in action some twenty minutes, till weakness from the terrible loss of blood overcame the artificial strength excitement had loaned him. Then, upheld by a young comrade, Baron Pilau, he went to the regimental first-aid station just behind the lines. Doctor and aid-doctor were so rushed with work that the regimental veterinary had been pressed into service; and it was the latter who, with Pilau, dressed Cantacuzène's wound. Then he was put on a horse and, with a soldier to accompany him, rode back eight miles to the hut where the regimental commander was installed. Here, the wounded were stretched out in a small orchard, on straw which had been scattered for their comfort.

All that hot day they lay, without any food or care, till in the evening, the end of the battle brought back

the surgeon and his aids. Then with the voluntary help of one or two officers, the doctors went their rounds in the suffering crowd, doing what little they could to give relief with the slender means at hand. My husband heard about him laments and broken phrases, and recognized some voices; but he could not turn to identify his neighbors in the orchard. He understood that there was as yet no organized service to look after the wounded at the front, and that he was thought to be dying. His wound was not re-dressed, but he was lifted by comrades' hands, gently, and carried into Prince Dolgorouky's room, where the latter ordered a bed of fresh hay arranged for him, and he was given doses of brandy and morphine. That night remains a painful memory, though his commander gave him what care he could. Constantly men came and went with reports and orders. If they knew Cantacuzène, they would approach his corner and offer a few encouraging words. In the morning there was a slight improvement in his condition, and he was so anxious to leave for home with the other wounded, who were to be transported to the railway, that the commander and the doctor consented. More morphine, more brandy, and he was again lifted by comrades and put into a springless peasant-cart, where his soldier servant and belongings had already been loaded. Michael's servant, Davidka, who had been attached to him for years and had been mobilized with him, was from our country place, of our own peasants; and his devotion showed in the long trip when he followed the doctor's orders as to how he must handle his master. His excellent care, certainly was one of the reasons why my husband lived through the torments of that voyage.

Two days, the procession of rough carts traveled backward towards the home-country, shaking the passengers over rough roads. Their slow pace was torture. Part of the time delirium, part of the time vague somnolence from weakness made for forgetfulness; while for the rest it was agony so great that my husband never refers to it in conversation. What I heard of their adventures came to me from a wounded fellow officer, traveling in a cart behind, who moved up from time to time to see how my husband was faring. Davidka, who sat many hours holding his master, told me that a traveling surgeon, in passing, stopped their cart, and taking my husband into an abandoned stable near the roadside washed his wound, changed the dressings on it, and unpacking Michael's small trunk changed all his clothes which were saturated from the bleeding. Finally, they reached the railroad, with our patient still living and conscious, though very weak. Here a train was made up of empty cars, which had brought troops and provisions, and was returning to St. Petersburg for more. The wounded were loaded in, pell-mell, foodless, and without attention. The faithful Davidka put his master into a berth, and installed himself nearby; and for more than two days they traveled thus, Davidka helping where and how he could.

A telegram was sent me by Prince Dolgorouky; and my husband also sent one on the way, and so we were expecting the sad train, and I went to meet Michael, taking our boy, on Sunday afternoon, the fourth day after he had been wounded. Since Wednesday morning my husband had dragged; and because he was not dead there was still hope, but that was all. He had had

no food on the journey, but the stimulants administered at the beginning, and now and then a glass of milk given him at the stations along the way by women, who, hearing of these wounded and their wretched plight, played the Good Samaritan and offered what they had — bread, fruit, and milk.

I met my invalid with an ambulance, a stretcher, and Dr. Cresson of the French Hospital, who was kind and talented, and full of interest in getting his first war patient. He heard the latter was so gravely wounded as not to be expected to hold out through the trip home; and he entered the car, to gather up this individual. He found his patient standing in the corridor. . . . To his question of, "Where, can you tell me, is Prince Cantacuzène, shot through the body, and dying?" the man addressed answered with a vague smile, "I am that person!" He was helped out of the car at once by the frightened Cresson and the faithful Davidka, and having told me he was "all right, and would not go to the hospital in an ambulance," he collapsed on the stretcher we had ready for him, and was carried away. His next sentence was that he "would certainly be well in three weeks, and would then return at once to the front." To this Doctor Cresson and I agreed with enthusiasm, on condition that for those three weeks he would allow himself to be nursed properly, and would not fret about the war. Then he gave himself up to the weakness, which for days he had held at bay by sheer will-power. Seven weeks he lay at the hospital, unable to raise an arm. Intense suffering, danger of blood-poisoning, pleurisy, high fever, nothing was wanting; and always the probable change for the worse, with the end hanging over us. . . . All

that science could contribute was given him; and the comfort and nursing of the Hospital and Sisters of St. Joseph were beyond praise. His good constitution did the rest; and after about a month, a slight change for the better was noticeable. The doctors promised he would live, though probably as an invalid, and with no possibility of ever taking up his career again.

During these weeks everyone was immensely kind. It would be impossible to count those who inquired, or came to see me in the first days; and later, as he was able to see them, at the hours allowed, my husband had a congregation of convalescent wounded comrades and other friends about his bed. Men and women had heard of the pain endured; and the feat of Kauschen's capture had made a great stir in our world. The dear maternal Grand Duchess Anastasia brought us letters and telegrams from her husband, in which the old Chief in the midst of all his activities found time to congratulate Cantacuzène, ask for his news, and to say that since he had consented to my husband's leaving him and going to the front he felt personally responsible for his being nearly killed. Now he was hoping to have Michael join the staff, where he could be kept out of further mischief, as soon as the cure was enough advanced to permit his leaving home. My husband was delighted with this arrangement, and once more it proved the Chief's kind tactfulness and understanding of his aid's mentality. Our Grand Duchess and her sister, Militza Nicolaïevna, brought the war news constantly to the sick-room, some of which they received directly from the Grand Duke; and thus we learned at first-hand, and with joyful tears, from his telegrams the news of the Galician advance,

and the taking of Lemberg and Przémysl. From the Grand Duchess's place came great clothes-baskets full of flowers, too, and all sorts of other dainties; and she was delighted, when she saw the pleasure Michael had in dividing them out among all the inmates of his hospital. Another great pride and comfort was the Golden Sword of St. George, awarded him unanimously by the committee of that order, with a rare dedication as to his merit and courage in continuing the duty intrusted to him, after the enemy had shot him through.

He had several unexpected visitors. One day the Empress Mother appeared quietly at the hospital door, having arrived without announcing herself, and asked her way up " to Cantacuzène's room." Her Majesty sat nearly an hour, with her lady-in-waiting, at the bedside, saying that she came as his "commander" (the Empress Mother was honorary commander to the Chevaliers Guards) to see how he was, and to thank him for his services. She explained that she had chosen Countess Mengden to accompany her that day because she knew the latter to be a childhood friend of her host's.

When her Majesty had left, and the hospital staff realized who had been within their walls unknown to them, these republican French religieuses were greatly upset! They had had a marble tablet put in their front hall commemorating a visit of the Grand Duchess Marie Pavlovna ten years before; and here they had had on the premises within a few weeks, the Grand Duchesses Militza, Anastasia, Victoria, and now the Empress; not to mention several Grand Dukes, old comrades of my husband, who had come quite fre-

quently to see him. And no one to receive or accompany these people, representing the hospital! I promised to let them know when any one like this was coming again, if I myself should hear beforehand of the projected visit.

Two days later my husband awakened from a short sleep, during which I had gone out to drive, and thought himself dreaming. The Emperor stood in the door, smiling with his charming, gentle smile, alone! As Michael made a painful movement to rise, his Majesty stepped quickly forward, putting a hand on his shoulder, to hold the invalid down; and shaking hands, he found himself a chair, and was seated near the bed. For some time the visitor stayed, made the sick man tell him all about his experiences at the front, asking many intelligent questions, and showing the keenest interest in all sorts of details connected with our troops, organization, transportation, and so on. On leaving, he thanked Michael for the services rendered the country and himself; and told him to "get well soon and afterwards to take care of himself." With all sorts of good wishes, the Emperor departed as quietly as he had come, and the heads of the hospital nearly collapsed over this visit! In compliment to my husband, his Majesty had brought as his attendants on this day two ex-Chevaliers Guards — General Woyeikoff, commandant of the palace, and Count Chérémétief, aid-de-camp. I heard from them that he had let them wait in the corridor, during most of his interview with Cantacuzène, calling them in at the end of a long hour for some general talk and the adieu.

My husband was deeply touched by the Sovereign's attitude, and the spontaneous manner in which he had

paid him the rare compliment of his visit; for such things were not habitual with Nicolas II. Especially was my husband moved by hearing afterward from several sources that the Emperor had said he "never heard from any one so clear a description of a battle; or from any officer such appreciation expressed of the plain soldiers under him, and such comprehension of their value and qualities." The Sovereign had noticed this, as when occasion offered, he himself always tried to show his love for the plain, poorer people of his realm.

When after two months my husband could leave the hospital, our new home was ready to receive him, and the children and I had been in it several weeks. It was in fair working order, in spite of the losses to our staff of servants caused by the mobilizations. The interest of seeing the new house helped Michael through the month when he was still condemned to the life of an invalid at home. Then he went to the Grand Ducal staff, where the old Chief received him with deep affection, established him in a compartment car next to the doctor, and gave minute directions to the latter to have a severe eye on this new patient, taking his orders by letter from Cantacuzène's doctors in St. Petersburg.

Through the winter my husband remained at the staff, gaining strength slowly, well cared for, well nourished, and with tasks that suited his lack of strength. He made two delightful trips. One, in the late winter, attached to General Sir Arthur Paget and the British mission, took him to Rumania to meet these guests; then back to the capital, where many official entertainments were given for the envoys; after which he conducted them down the front into Galicia,

where the English saw our troops under fire, and were forced into great admiration of their bravery and patience, their capacity to stand cold, hunger and fatigue, and yet fight on. This trait, in both officers and soldiers, seemed to strike every foreigner attached to any part of our front, and called forth enthusiastic comment always but especially in the later disasters of the retreat of 1915.

Better still was the second trip, in the spring, when the Emperor joined the Chief at the staff, and together they made a triumphal tour of inspection through Galicia. Everywhere they were acclaimed with wild enthusiasm, as the Emperor was shown the new provinces added to his land.

This journey impressed the Sovereign with the importance of the conquests made, and it gained his interest to the cause of winning from Soukhomlinoff the delivery of ammunition, needed to go on with our advance. During the winter, talk of this necessity had been interesting everyone. Before the Chief undertook his offensive into Galicia, there had been much discussion, as the Grand Duke, mistrusting Soukhomlinoff, had counseled not commencing the campaign till cannon and ammunition should be on hand in great reserves. These were promised by the War Minister for the end of the winter, and the Emperor had guaranteed his word. The offensive was then made, and had proved such a success that not only town after town became Russian, but the enemy's troops were joining our flag in large numbers, sometimes entire units of Czechs or Slavs passing over to our side, with their music, officers and banners; and our armies looked down already from the summits of the Carpathian

Mountains on to the Hungarian plains, and menaced Budapest. But we could go no farther without the wherewithal to shoot; and while we stood still, the Germans were rushing their picked troops south, to reinforce their fleeing allies. The Imperial progress, made by auto in part, and through beautiful country, was suggested to engage the Emperor's coöperation. His Majesty was delighted with the new acquisitions offered him; and having enjoyed seeing them, and the excitement also of traveling through new lands — as a conqueror — to the full, he complimented the various commanding generals of the armies in the field, and gave the Grand Duke a diamond-mounted sword as a souvenir of his gratitude, with an edict of thanks. Then he returned to the waiting circle at Tzarskoe, and listened to their commendations of Soukhomlinoff, and to the War Minister's own honeyed words of explanation. The War Minister even went down to reassure the Chief in person, at staff headquarters; and returned playing the martyr, as he was there shown that his *acts* would be more impressive than his words, and was told that time was precious, since perhaps the fate of the war hung in the balance.

All the country and the army joined in feeling this issue to be of paramount importance. To such an extent was it the case, that the Duma took it up; and Soukhomlinoff went to a session about the beginning of February, and publicly gave his word of honor that by the middle of March the promised supplies would be served out, all along the front — cannon, guns and ammunition, in fixed quantities, which he named. In the meantime, he and his friends at court (Mme. Wiroboff, Woyeikoff and their clique) represented that

Soukhomlinoff was a man of his word and a devoted servitor of their Majesties; that he had been ill-treated by the liberal elements of the Duma, because of his old-fashioned ideas of loyalty; that the Grand Duke, for personal reasons and from ambition to hold the military power alone, had constantly suspected his intentions, and had joined the liberal movement; that the poor Minister of War was being "eaten up" in the Emperor's estimation; and that the Grand Duke was trying to get undue popularity with the army. And "who could tell how he might use his power when he arrived at this result?" The Grand Duke had persuaded, they said, the Sovereign to let him make the proclamation to the Poles — in the autumn of 1914 — in the Imperial name; and he had thus gained their allegiance by his association with their proposed autonomy. He had gone with the Emperor on a trip into Galicia, and had been acclaimed with, and as much as, his master. Already, the cabinet ministers were running back and forth from the staff; already foreign governments were addressing telegrams and compliments to the generalissimo!

Such a plausible, insidious campaign was inaugurated that the Empress's indignation was roused; and she put herself frankly at the head of the Wiroboff-Soukhomlinoff party, to save her husband from the results of his too affectionate and trusting nature, and from the liberals, who wanted to undermine his rights; also from the possible rival she saw looming large on the horizon. The Emperor demurred, refused to take action, but was duly interested in the case presented to him, and his jealousy of the Grand Duke was some-

what aroused. Orloff saw the dangers and bravely tried to stem the current, throwing all his ability and the weight of his influence to the side of the Grand Duke; praising him discreetly, recalling his talents and modesty, his devotion in the past, his lack of ambition, and his dignified and unassuming demeanor during the triumphs in Galicia. His having seen only those ministers sent him by the Emperor to talk with him, and his having made the Polish proclamation by order from above, were points emphasized by Orloff repeatedly.

For a time the Emperor remained vacillating; but the daily sowing of distrust in his mind was beginning to bear fruit. Soukhomlinoff was not pushed; and when, thanks to his failure to make good his promises, the retreat began, and the Grand Duke demanded that the Minister of War be dismissed, judged and shot for his treachery, nothing was done to him, though the whole country was indignant at such weakness. Then it was that the Commander-in-Chief — who felt in loyalty to the crown he could not give his resignation now in the face of the disaster which had come to pass — uttered the solemn warning that the protection of such a traitor as Soukhomlinoff risked putting the army and the people into a frame of mind which would make for the easy acceptance of any revolutionary propaganda that might be preached to them. The soldiers knew they had been ruthlessly sacrified, and the people felt this also; and if the criminal who had caused so much misery, humiliation and carnage, were not held responsible by the throne, what could be thought of Sovereign autocracy? Knowing all the

circumstances could the Emperor prefer the cause of such an abject creature, to that of the whole country and his Allies? . . .

This protest of the Grand Duke's was spread about, no one knew how, and it was said everywhere that he had acted as he should, and had only remained in his place, because as an example to the soldiers he must obey orders, and not leave his post during the retreat. It was felt he had been sorely abused, and he was more adored than ever. All over the country his name and portrait were to be heard and seen. He stood for loyalty and devotion to the Emperor's best interests; and was counted above reproach. The Soukhomlinoff party, with the Empress at its head, came forward for the first time to play a political rôle; and because of the Empress's origin, and of the fact that Soukhomlinoff among other faults was discovered to have protected various spies of Germany, and to have played (through the lack of ammunition and his false promises) into German hands, it was called loudly and continuously the "German" or "Occult" Party at court. It comprised Rasputin as its prophet, and other picturesque but shady characters. Strange tales were told of its reunions and its plans. Tales of future ambition, also.

The Grand Duke found himself counted the head of an opposing party, quite unconsciously and against his will. In fact, at this time the city of Moscow sent a deputation, asking him to overthrow the Emperor; and take the throne himself. This I knew of, because his Imperial Highness refused even to receive them, and my husband was charged with the delivery of the Grand Duke's refusal to consider or discuss any such

propositions. On the side with the Grand Duke, for an open pursuit of spies, stood the Duma; and the opinion of honest men of all classes over the country upheld them, as did also many members of the cabinet. The Emperor stood between, hesitating, uncertain; drawn towards one group by the circle round him with its daily suggestions, and also by his affectionate belief in the Empress and her intelligence; drawn to the other side by his reliance on the Grand Duke's strong arm, and the fine reputations of those who upheld him.

Orloff was the ambassador to and from the staff, and handled these delicate missions with such consummate tact and discretion that all difficulties were robbed of their acute angles by his words, and no message carried a sting. Finally, after several months of retreat; after the loss of nearly all our conquests, and the massacre of tens of thousands of Russia's bravest sons; with our riches in harvests, cities and provinces handed to the enemy or destroyed; with our army fighting with naked fists and sticks, or unloaded cannon, and guns that had bayonets only; unbeaten, undaunted, we retreated to Warsaw, losing men and ground as little as was possible; using every natural protection of swamps or woods; tearing down buildings to employ the bricks for ammunition; holding our lines, and rallying again. Many were the regiments five times renewed in personnel, patient always, with almost no food or rest for weary bodies; yet never was our line broken through.

And the Grand Duke in his misery had the one supreme satisfaction of knowing that all the world bowed down to his strength and military ability, and that he had saved his army from a complete rout. Never in

all our history was so grand a page, as the story of those terrible months of the retreat in 1915; and crowned with the glory of his courage, towering above his men, was the noble figure of the old Chief, the leader and inspirer of them all, adored by the whole country except those people who owed him most.

A slow and sickening waste of opportunity; and suddenly the Emperor made up his mind. Soukhomlinoff was summarily dismissed and was replaced by the extremely liberal General Polivanoff, wounded during the last war, and with a record of intelligence, honesty and bravery, something of a politician, and a friend of the Duma. Not only this; but the Duma, which had been closed indefinitely in the spring, was called again for the first of August, and all Russia was on tiptoes with hope and expectancy.

During the spring's early months my husband had been able to ride again, at first slowly on a quiet horse, and with the doctor in attendance; and as time passed, and he gained daily in strength and energy, it seemed impossible the dying man of ten months before could be the normal individual clamoring to depart for the firing line again. Yet the Grand Duke kept him at staff headquarters, to Michael's indignation and dismay. All of his companions reported when they came to Petrograd the discussions that Cantacuzène had daily with his Chief on this subject; and the fatherly kindness and severity of the latter. It was characteristic of the Grand Duke that he sent me a message at this time. He said that he was not at all frightened by the invalid's violence, and that I was not to be so either. He had considered that he (the Chief) was

to blame for the awful wound at Kauschen, and he was infinitely grateful for Cantacuzène's recovery. He also considered that my husband had done his entire duty for the country now and could, without possibility of criticism, remain in the staff, where he had his normal work to do, and where he filled his place extremely well; but the man wanted to go away so much, and he had such a vocation for soldiering, that undoubtedly he deserved by his record a command of responsibility at the extreme front. Would I tell him what I thought about it; and would I also see the surgeons who had cared for Cantacuzène and ask if in their opinion, he could begin life under fire again? Malama, his doctor, had written them a diagnosis of the case in its present phases.

Orloff, who bore the message to me, added, "The Chief said he would promise not to speak of all this to your husband, if you would make the same promise about him; as he believes you will both be given a very bad quarter of an hour by Cantacuzène, if the tale of our conspiracy comes to light."

I saw the doctors; and as they seemed to believe from Malama's report that the patient could stand the rough life again, I sent the Grand Duke word, I felt I had no right to protest, when the situation at the front was so terrible, and when every man capable of fighting counted. . . . I had had a comparatively tranquil winter, mentally, and that was more than I could have expected. I knew this was due to his kindness; and I could only be grateful now, if he gave my husband, the much-desired command on the firing line. So Michael had a leave for two weeks, the first

he had taken since his sick-leave of hospital days; and I was enchanted to see how he enjoyed it, and how his vigor gave him back confidence in the future and renewed his joy in life.

CHAPTER IV

LIFE IN PETROGRAD

I closed up our town-house with regret, when at the end of May we started for the country, where I had promised to spend the summer with our children, at my mother-in-law's. I had enjoyed my winter very much in spite of the war which had filled it; or perhaps because of that, for I was very busy. Besides the interest I took in all our personal business, which my husband had turned over to me, I had undertaken work for two hospitals — those founded by the women of the Chevaliers Guards Regiment, and by the nobility of Petrograd. Also, I had gone into the supplying of our regiment with necessities and comforts, at the head of the committee of officers' wives and mothers. These things gave me a great deal of occupation at irregular times; while for daily work, I had joined with great enthusiasm the bandage-factory arranged by the Empress Mother at the Anitchkoff palace.

These gatherings were small, informal and cozy. The members were comrades and friends, and our Imperial hostess frequently dropped in to see how we were getting on, giving us always an encouraging compliment. Tea served daily at five, ended our labor; and we were sent home with a delightful feeling of being very useful and greatly appreciated! Ambition to

excel in our work, both as to quantity and quality, was kept at fever heat, as we were all Chevaliers Guard women, and felt that the honor of the regiment rested upon our shoulders. An admirable professional taught us, and was very severe over any piece of botched bandage or compress. Our "ouvroir" was the talk of Petrograd for the harmony reigning therein, and was cited for its value as compared with the one at the Winter Palace. Our hostess was entirely to be thanked for this, as her smiles and presence made us feel content and anxious to please. Sometimes she would put on one of our great, white aprons, and would sit an hour, working at the long table, folding or packing; and her presence made for the gay laughter and anecdote of other times. She showed herself very indignant at the changing of the capital's name from "St. Petersburg" to "Petrograd," saying, "As if we had not more important things to do than to be renaming our cities in such times as these!" and remarking that the present government "had better leave Peter the Great's work alone!" Also, she told us of the experience she had gone through when, though William Hohenzollern had telegraphed her permission to pass unmolested through Germany, from the Belgian frontier to the Russian, her train was stopped in Berlin; and only after long negotiations, and many insults that roused her anger, she was arrogantly turned off, towards Denmark. She leaned forward once, and speaking down the length of our work-table suddenly said to me, "Princess, your friend the Crown Prince is certainly a pig!" And then, for the general edification, she went into much detail of explanation as to this young man's exploits

among the French châteaux. She had always spoken of the Crown Prince's politeness to me since a time, twelve years before, while his Imperial Highness was on an official visit to our court, he had been greatly fêted, and my husband being attached to his suite, he had shown me kindness, and I had often danced with him.

She told us too, how the young married couple, Prince and Princess Youssoupoff — the latter a daughter of the Grand Duchess Xénia Alexandrovna and granddaughter of her Majesty — had been stopped in Berlin when war broke out; and how the young Princess having appealed to her own first cousin, the Crown Princess of Germany — the Crown Princess has a Russian Grand Duchess for mother, a sister of Alexander Mihaïlovitch, who is the husband of the Grand Duchess Xenia — for aid and protection, she had received a cold reply from a court-chamberlain that "Her Imperial Highness the Crown Princess could do nothing to help her." When her Majesty had come through, she had picked up these young people, together with other Russians she had heard of as being stranded, and brought them through on her own train, in spite of difficulties made by the German Government.

During those months early in the war the Empress Mother won all hearts, and wore her health out, going on long fatiguing rounds of hospitals in Petrograd, encouraging and helping the wounded, founding charities for families of poor soldiers without resources; and towards spring, working to aid and feed the refugees from Poland, who threatened to swamp the whole country by their numbers. She had both courage and

energy, a never-absent gentle smile, and a manner that warmed all hearts to her quiet, dignified person. Never had she played such a marked rôle as now. Since her widowhood, she had always preferred a most retired life, but with the crying misery waiting to be helped, this woman felt her people calling to her; and in spite of age and infirmities she buckled on her armor, and went forth. The humblest soldier's bedside was not too mean to hold her attention by its suffering and tale of battle. She was vastly admired by the poor, and known wherever a helping hand was needed; and all those who worked under her orders grew to esteem and respect her mind and organizing capacity. She understood her rôle so well that when the revolution came, there was a universal thought for her Majesty's sorrow; and that she should be among those doomed to trouble in the general upheaval, was deeply regretted by high and low alike!

During all this first winter of the war, courage was kept up by the news of our fine military record; and though there were no large parties for society, small dinners abounded in hospitable homes. Little groups gathered often in the evenings, at one friend's or another's, to work and talk and plan, and even sometimes for a game of bridge. Besides this, there were a few formal and official dinners at the embassies and ministries for various visitors of distinction. The Grand Duchess Marie Pavlovna had a small set of intimates dining with her quite regularly, to roll bandages afterward; and to other houses one was invited, on condition one made oneself useful. But though there were wounded and killed to be served, or cared for, the depressing influences of failure had not yet

come, and these parties seemed very gay. Almost always, extreme simplicity of amusement and of dress was the rule, naturally.

I personally look back to that period with pleasure, as I was momentarily tranquil as to my husband's safety, knowing he was at the staff; and the children's lives ran smoothly also. I loved our new home, and when I did not go out, I quite regularly each evening opened my own salons in an informal manner. Besides seeing all the old friends who chanced to be in town, I met many new and interesting types among the government men or those attached to foreign missions, who brought me letters of introduction.

Towards spring I felt a change in the capital's mentality. Michael's letters from the Grand Duke's staff, day by day, also reflected the impressions made there, by the terrible retreat; and in Petrograd the national and individual sorrow was very great, and the cheerfulness that had marked gatherings through the winter, departed, once and for all. There was a quantity of gossip about the "Occult" or German forces beginning to influence events; and a general foreboding as to the future created an atmosphere difficult to live in. Parties were forming; and it was an ever-growing complication to steer a straight course among the eddies of suspicion, when we knew one was apt to be accused without reason of belonging to this clan or another, and of trying to blacken those in opposition.

June and early July my husband remained at the staff, still fretting to get away to the front, while I remained in the country. About the last of July he was suddenly named to command the Cuirassiers of His Majesty the Emperor, a magnificent regiment of

picked men, admirably well-officered, and already with a remarkably fine record for discipline and bravery during this war. Cantacuzène was enchanted. He left the staff in haste for Petrograd, telegraphing me to join him, as he would be there for the length of time it took his nomination to go through the various departments of the War Ministry, before it went into effect. If he went to the front, there were various things to be settled upon between us. We stopped in town with the Orloffs, who this year had kept their palace open all summer, and where the congregation of interesting people was ever greater and more brilliant. The weather was pleasant, my host and hostess infinitely hospitable, and the events that were being enacted about me were so absorbing that I accepted their tempting invitation finally and remained on with them through the whole summer, putting in hand a lot of work for the new regiment, and looking on at the historical drama that was developing.

CHAPTER V

THE DISMISSAL OF THE GRAND DUKE

August first, 1915, the Duma met in the great hall of the Tauride Palace. The members were to hear from the Imperial ministers the state of affairs in the army and the government; and it was hoped they would show a warm feeling of loyalty in upholding the latter. Thus a renewal of strength might be infused into the cabinet's actions to maintain the army; and help it with ammunition and all the other necessities we still lacked so grievously at the front, thanks to Soukhomlinoff's reign at the War Ministry. In spite of the frightful tragedy still going on, public feeling was one of hope again; and as we drove to the great palace of parliament and settled ourselves in our seats, we felt much encouraged, as we recalled our mental attitude of two months before. I had gone with some friends, and had a place in the front row of the loge retained for the Emperor's suite. It was just opposite the ministerial bench, the speaker's desk, and the president's chair, where a great portrait of the Emperor hung as background. It was an extremely interesting gathering, and a red-letter day.

Always it seems to me an irony of fate that to house the people's first effort at a congress, the building chosen should be the palace of the Prince of the Tauride (Potemkin), the arrogant and autocratic favorite of our great Catherine! I imagined what he would

think were he to see some of the people his walls received!

But this day was not one for contention. On the contrary, Soukhomlinoff — accused long since of the responsibility for our distaster — was at last dismissed, and replaced by the popular Polivanoff, who sat there opposite us. The change had been won from the Emperor by the tenacity of the Grand Duke Nicolas and his group; and for the moment the German-Occult party was down. It was hoped the mighty criminal would be judged and shot, as an example of what must be expected by those who were treacherous to their country in its hour of need. . . . There was excitement also in the Polish group at the Duma, as since the promises made vaguely to the Poles by the Grand Duke's proclamation early in the war, no definite word from the throne had reached them. They were suffering greatly, much of their country being in the enemy's hands; and at this moment the latter was threatening their capital. . . . Each minister was to speak in turn; and we waited with immense interest for the things we were to hear.

As the always impressive Rodzanko, president of the Duma, went to his place, and rapped upon his desk, there was immediate silence. His speech was short and patriotic, much applauded and appreciated. Enthusiasm was the order of the day. Then from the minister's bench came the old Prime Minister, and read his speech. Gorymékin was very broken in health, of small stature, bent, and with a poor, low voice; but to this silent crowd his words came clear and full, in promise of better days, of the desire of our Sovereign to be strong in defending his land; and

to stretch out generous hands to all his people, asking for their help, promising them his. The message from him to the Poles was received with grateful tears upon their cheeks! When Gorymékin finished, what had been only hope before, turned to faith in every heart! . . . We waited then impatiently to hear what Polivanoff would say. He was pale from the excitement of his maiden effort before such an assembly; and speech was made difficult to him by strain of nerves, weight of responsibility, and especially by a troublesome twitching of the muscles in his neck — the result of an old wound. Also, he had nothing good to tell us. Warsaw was doomed; nearly all our conquered provinces were back in the enemy's hands; and much of our own territory besides. But nefarious influences, responsible for all this, were at last set aside — his, Polivanoff's presence in the cabinet proved it — and he said vigorous measures were already taken to obtain the ammunition so dreadfully needed. All must stand together in the country now, behind our heroic army; and that day everyone present felt ready to do so.

Sazonoff also made a short fine speech, giving a brief sketch of the causes of the war, the action of the Foreign Office before and since, and the relations of Russia with her Allies. At the mention of the latter, the whole audience sprang to their feet, and cheered the ambassadors of the Allies, who were in the loge next us; the latter rose and bowed, delighted with such a spontaneous tribute. . . . Other ministers then spoke on commerce, the navy, our industries and agriculture. Finally, Bark made a concise, satisfactory statement on the financial position.

All these men were well received by the attentive deputies, and public. The only interruptions came from the grateful Polish element, who applauded and cheered when Gorymékin spoke of them; and from the enthusiastic greetings to the Allied Ambassadors. There had been also two vague exclamatory interruptions, from two rather carelessly dressed and rumpled-haired individuals, who lounged in their deputies' seats and did not rise while speaking. One, dark, clean-shaven and of rather a Jewish type, I was told, was "an eloquent fellow at times, but disorderly, and with exaggerated views, named Kerensky." The other, "a leader of a party of hot-heads, and always attacking the government, was Tcheïdsy." Both men were to leave their mark, two years later, on the revolution.

When we left the Duma, it was with a feeling that whatever our troubles, and the terrible mistakes that had caused them, they were being corrected now. The Crown was well supported by a fine cabinet, and the future could not fail to be good. . . . The days passed, and this impression began to wear away. The retreat all along the line continued. Warsaw surrendered; and many other great cities, rich with our small reserves of ammunition or supplies, were ceded one after another, inevitably, to the enemy. Our officers and soldiers fought magnificently, reserve regiments, waiting unarmed in the firing line to take the guns from those men in front who should be killed or wounded. Sometimes the joyful news came into the lines that there "was ammunition behind," but in such small quantities that the soldiers would run several miles back to fetch some part of it before it disap-

peared among the hungry hands so longingly outstretched to the distributors.

Terrible tales of our regiments and batteries, defenseless, yet fighting for each inch of ground they gradually vacated; tales of bravery such as no other army showed, save perhaps only the Belgians', came back to us. We were still paying for Soukhomlinoff's crimes; the slaughter was frightful; and besides the cruelty of it to the nation, our staffs and commanders were greatly preoccupied by the thought of what a grave waste was being made of our best material in men, and what a strain was being put on the morale of troops so handled. The retreat of 1915, with its heroism of officers and soldiers, and the silence in which the whole country suffered and still upheld the government, was strong proof of the confidence in our Grand Duke, and our loyalty to the government. It should buy forgiveness for many sins of our people, both past and future. Those who watched us during this period, must understand why, as things grew worse, the seeds of revolution, which were being sown by German agents, found fertile ground in the suppressed but general indignation. The fault was not in lack of our patriotism, nor lack of funds, at this moment. The finances of the country were admitted to have been well managed, and Polivanoff was rushing his orders. Everyone said immense energy was being shown; and all realized they were only paying for past faults, which had disorganized the transportation and the administrative departments, making them helpless. The fatal intrigues of the dark powers made them most generally and cordially hated for creating

all this. That party still fought the strong, loyal group of ministers who with liberal views like the Commander-in-Chief's, demanded and implored that everything should be done to find a satisfactory solution of the terrible problems.

Despair gradually shut down about our hearts. One day at this time, I saw the devoted wife of the Commander-in-Chief, during a hurried trip her Imperial Highness made from Kief to Petrograd. She was very preoccupied, and I was greatly shocked to notice how worn she looked, and hear what she said of the Chief and his sufferings over the army's plight. Ammunition ordered by Polivanoff could not be brought to the front, he knew, for some weeks yet. He was straining every nerve to obtain better supplies from the helpless powers in Petrograd: and the distress increasing among the troops, weighed upon him to the point where the Grand Duchess feared her husband would have a complete nervous breakdown. She said to me, " Often the Grand Duke writes me how he wishes he might go out and under fire take part in the unfair battle, where the cream of our nation is being slaughtered. It breaks his heart to remain inactive, and to face the telegrams, with news of the retreat, which pour in daily, yet he has done everything human brain can devise to obtain ammunition. Nothing has helped, and he feels now he must shoulder the responsibility and let even his soldiers believe he has not worked for them, but has allowed them to be sacrificed, when he loves them as his children. The power against him is too great, and after many months he is in despair, and awaits his own fate quite calmly, with his conscience at rest." The Grand Duchess wept

over the situation, as many of us did; and I left her with a foreboding of I knew not what disaster.

A few days later, I went by appointment to call on Mme. Gorymékin. Arriving at her cottage on the islands, I found many ministerial motors before her door, and the larger of her two salons was filled with a group of men talking in animated voices, which reached us from time to time through the closed doors. My hostess and I sat in a smaller room, and I said laughingly, "You have a large gathering, Madame. It cannot be a cabinet meeting on a Sunday afternoon?"

And she answered:

"Dear Princess, it is a sudden meeting my husband called to-day. He is very anxious over the grave news just received." I inquired if there was something wrong at the front again, but she said, "No; it is much, much worse, and more tragic than that; but I must not divulge it, and perhaps — they hope — it can be yet prevented."

I stayed a little longer with the poor old lady, and we talked of other things; but motoring home through the warm afternoon, the lovely islands with great Catherine's palace of Elaguen seemed no longer attractive. One shivered at the thought of what the future might contain for us! By this time we all feared the force of the Occult powers working below the surface at court!

The next morning, news was passed about that the Grand Duke had been dismissed from his post, and banished to the Caucasian front — with a title of Viceroy, it is true, but without more than a brief rescript of official thanks. We knew the bearer to him of this

news was General Polivanoff, who had begged to be spared the painful duty assigned him. We heard also that the whole cabinet had unitedly done all they could to prevent the sending away from staff headquarters of Russia's great standard-bearer, the lion-hearted Commander-in-Chief. The Empress Mother had for once thrown aside all her prejudice against mixing in politics, and had remonstrated with her son, begging him to spare the Grand Duke. Old Count Fréedericksz, a faithful servant of the throne for more than fifty years, and Minister of the Court, had risked disgrace to enter his protest. Several of the Grand Dukes had done likewise; but all to no avail. The Empress's party now appeared openly and aggressively in politics, and the Grand Duke was definitely relieved of his command; which was to be taken over by the Emperor in person.

Two days later it was announced that Prince Orloff was dismissed from court, and ordered to accompany the Grand Duke Nicolas to the Caucasus. Orloff received no explanation of his sudden disgrace. He had no interview with, and no message from, the Sovereign, near whom he had been for so many years. He was quite broken down by the manner of his dismissal, as his devotion to the Emperor was entirely personal, and within bounds.

All sorts of wild stories were current at this time. Of course, everyone said it was Rasputin's influence that had accomplished this disgraceful act, to dislodge two of his enemies; and the most detailed accounts of interviews between the false monk and those he had influenced were whispered about. As a matter of fact, I believe Rasputin took little part in these events,

save that dictated to him by Mme. Wiroboff and others, who undoubtedly engineered their business in the name of the man they put nominally at the head of their party. Ever since the Grand Duke had obtained Soukhomlinoff's dismissal, in the conspirators' minds he himself was doomed; and the charges made against him by the Empress's protégés, were largely because of his extreme popularity everywhere in the country, and the adoration of the army for its Commander-in-Chief. Falsely, it was represented to the Emperor that this feeling was being worked up with disloyal intentions by the Grand Duke himself, and might, by the latter and his followers, be used in a manner to menace the crown.

Orloff had been on the defensive for the Grand Duke, and this implicated him in the so-called conspiracy. Many were jealous of Orloff and of his position with both Sovereign and commander-in-chief. Probably when the news of the departure of the latter reached him, Orloff rushed to implore the decision should be reconsidered; and thus he unconsciously gave color in the Emperor's judgment to the accusations made against himself. I am sure his Majesty, who had been very fond both of his cousin and of Orloff and had trusted them, must have suffered greatly in the belief of their combined treachery, when he was forced to accept it; and very frequently in the months that followed, he missed their loyal service.

With reference to this, an official story was told me by one of the ministers, which, knowing the Emperor's great sense of duty, seems to me worthy of belief. M. Bark told it me, and his loyalty and truthfulness gave it weight. He said that in July,

1914, at the moment war was declared, the Emperor stated to his assembled council-of-ministers, that he had always reproached himself for not going to the front during the Japanese war, sharing the hardships of the troops, and the responsibilities of the commanders; and that in this war he would not repeat the same mistake, but meant to command his armies in person. The cabinet on hearing this, united to dissuade the Sovereign from carrying out his wish, as they feared the danger to his person, also the danger of leaving the government to the regent's care if the Emperor took the field. To them it seemed better to have the responsibility for possible disaster carried by some one who might be replaced on occasion, and thus keep the Imperial credit intact. Their arguments had prevailed with the Emperor, and after reflection he had named the Grand Duke to the supreme command, remaining himself in the capital at the head of his government. M. Bark felt that possibly the retreat of the spring and summer of 1915 had brought this old thought, and the self-reproach he had spoken of, back to the Sovereign's mind; and that it was a desire to make his army feel he stood with them, which in part influenced his Majesty to change the Grand Duke to the Caucasian front, and take command himself just at the height of the drama.

The Grand Duke awaited his Majesty at the staff, and received him with such dignity and tact that even those who were his critics were won to admiration and ready to give unstinted praise forever after to his magnificent poise and manner. After forty-eight hours all details were settled, and everything was handed over to the new occupants of headquarters.

The Sovereign accompanied his cousin to the latter's train. Those who watched the parting said the Emperor seemed suddenly greatly distressed and upset, while the Grand Duke bore himself with the usual quiet pride natural to him. He seemed trying to uphold the Sovereign's courage for the great task ahead. As the train drew away, his Majesty stepped forward as if to stop it, but said no word, and it disappeared in the distance, leaving him Commander-in-Chief, as well as Sovereign, of all the Russian armies.

CHAPTER VI

THE "OCCULT" PARTY

After the Emperor took personal command of the army he made only flying trips to Tzarskoe, and his ministers wasted much time going back and forth to the staff. Some of them made reports to the Empress at Tzarskoe, but these were irregular, and seemingly rare and unofficial. They became more frequent, however, as time passed, and more of the Occult party received portfolios. The Emperor often went on tours of inspection to the front, and was several times under fire, showing invariably perfect courage and calm. He was now with his troops as he had wished to be long since, and he was satisfied himself, though his suite were in constant anxiety. The Empress went occasionally to the staff, always accompanied by Mme. Wiroboff; and the heir to the throne, a fragile boy, lived there with his father. Most people who knew anything of what was happening deeply regretted an arrangement which took the Sovereign so much away from his government. At home there was continuous trouble politically, for which the slight improvement in the fortunes of the armies was scarcely a consolation. In the early autumn, some of the ammunition ordered by Polivanoff began to arrive at the front, and people were grateful for the relief in this direction. Gorymékin, on the other hand, advised the clos-

ing of the Duma, which he considered was showing arrogance in protesting against various retrograde acts of the government. He opposed the desires of the liberal elements in the cabinet, which thought it was the moment when, for the Emperor's strength, and the stability of the dynasty, as well as the general good of the country, the Sovereign must stretch out his hand to parliament, and offer as a gift measures which might otherwise later be forced from him.

The Prime Minister, though loyal and dignified, was of another generation, and he thought our empire could be strong only on the old lines of a pure autocracy. The mere existence of the Duma disturbed him vastly. There was a prolonged struggle between the two groups in the cabinet, and relations were very strained among its members. Finally the Duma was closed by Imperial edict. This measure caused violent irritation everywhere, and was again attributed to Occult influences. At this time, the men who composed the ministry were of unimpeachable honesty of purpose and devotion to the crown; and the basis of their difficulty was only as to which method would obtain the most quickly the results desired — winning of the war, and strengthening the Emperor's hold upon his people

Gorymékin was for a strong rule, and he felt all concessions to a liberal policy would show weakness; also, that one concession must lead to another. The school of thought preaching that the Emperor must join with the parliament, keeping the old promises made ten years before, and that he would only gain force by such actions, was represented by a most able group of men; Polivanoff, in the War Ministry; Sazon-

off, in Foreign Affairs; Bark, in Finances; while Krivaschène, in Agriculture, was their head. The reputation of each one of these was of experience as a specialist in his subject, and they all were young, enthusiastic and strong. Krivaschène, the leader of the movement, was especially admired and believed in, as in collaboration with Stolypin, his agrarian reforms had been both successful and far-reaching. Optimists regarded him as the Prime Minister of the future, if his ideas prevailed in the present. The rest of the cabinet was insignificant as compared with these men, and little doubt was felt for a time of their capacity to persuade the Emperor to their opinions. But Gorymékin had an influence to back him, which was of more weight than all others, in swaying the Emperor's judgment. The Empress was his supporter: and Krivaschène's group after a short struggle, was entirely defeated. Krivaschène himself immediately resigned: and, though the Emperor asked him to re-consider this step, after ten days' wait he resigned again, and definitely. The others of his persuasion remained in the cabinet, feeling it to be a patriotic duty on account of the war; but they well knew their road from then on would be a difficult one.

This was the second marked triumph of the reactionary party, and the Occult influences were indeed at work. All the liberals prepared for the struggle to come, feeling that they must carry it on with a hidden enemy undermining their reputations, and putting their best efforts in a light that would appear disadvantageous. Krivaschène was somewhat criticized for deserting his party in such a moment, while on the contrary his admirers thought his act the only course open



The Czarevitch Alexis. A Portrait made for Distribution Among the Soldiers

to him, since he felt he harmed a good cause, he wished to serve, by remaining. It was repeated about that he had said "the mere fact that he suggested or approved a measure, made a reason why in the eyes of the retrogrades it should be voted down." Some one suggested he had resigned because he lacked confidence in himself. "Oh, no!" answered one of his colleagues. "Krivaschène's bravery is unassailable, and he never lacks confidence in himself. He does, like many others, though, lack confidence in the situation at present!" I think this was true; and Krivaschène, though hurt, showed great dignity at this period, while gossip was rife. He made no complaints, but went at once to the front, as head of one of the army Red Cross organizations, where he did excellent work. Probably, by disappearing from public life, he hoped to attract the Emperor's attention to the fact that in his mind it was the turning point in our policy, beyond which no patriotically inclined public man could consent to following the retrograde program. Events proved his judgment was right about this, though not about the Imperial capacity to recognize the signs of the times. In the division of the cabinet which caused his resignation, the government took the last turn in the road which led to disaster.

I spent the early autumn in the country, returning to Petrograd for November and December, to see to Christmas things, which must be prepared and forwarded by our women's regimental committee, for the Cuirassiers, who were then on the Polish front. They had had a most active autumn, since the cavalry had been doing heavy work protecting our retreat, which continued, though more slowly, and with less difficulty,

since the army was receiving some provisions. My husband joined me for a few days at the capital, where he came on military business, and he asked then for an audience with his Majesty, who chanced to be at Tzarskoe for a time. It was the first time he had seen the Sovereign, since taking over the command of His Majesty's Own Cuirassiers, and as he had been for so long aid-de-camp to the old Chief, and was known to be devoted to the latter, and to have received his present command from him, Michael felt the interview with the new Commander-in-Chief might prove a somewhat trying experience.

Far from this being the case, the Sovereign received him with quite especial kindness, going back to their talk at the hospital, more than a year before, and telling my husband how pleased he was to know "his" Cuirassiers were in such excellent hands. Then his Majesty asked various details as to the work the regiment was doing. He granted immediately the requests Cantacuzène made for things required to help the regimental efficiency, and gave an order, among others, that two motors should be delivered to the regiment as a gift from himself; one for trucking, and one for the commander's use. After a lengthy conversation when my husband saluted, the Emperor shook hands with him, and with good wishes for his and the regiment's luck, said good-by most graciously. As my husband reached the door and opened it, his Majesty suddenly called him back. Cantacuzène went, and stood in front of him, awaiting orders. "Don't you think you are very young to be in command of such an important unit as my Cuirassiers?" he asked. My husband answered, "I don't know, your Majesty. It

is for you to judge," thinking it possible there was a change coming to him. He was only a colonel, yet occupied the place of a brigadier-general. "I think you are much too young, and of rank too low," continued the Emperor. "We must mend matters at once; so I name you major-general, and congratulate you upon belonging to my suite!" Cantacuzène was quite stunned by the two honors coming at once, and just when he thought he might be less favored than others, because of his past career; but the Sovereign perhaps wished, on the contrary, to draw about himself some of the old Grand Duke's followers; or perhaps he remembered the story of Kauschen's capture, and of Michael's grave wound, and gave him credit for his record there and the hard fighting he had been doing since in the last five months.

When our Emperor chose to exert it, he had immense charm of eyes and voice and smile; and early in this time of his command at the staff, the stories of his interest, kindness and intelligent understanding in the handling of the people who came into contact with him were very sympathetic. They created a certain personal popularity, which lasted until he fell entirely under the influence of the Occult group, after which he became so inert, distracted and vague, that color seemed to be given, by his behavior and changed looks, to the rumor that he was being drugged by Mme. Wiroboff's agents near him.

Even from the autum of 1915, however, he was greatly separated from his cabinet, by the military duties he had undertaken, and the distance to the staff — now transferred to Moghileff by the German capture of Baranovitch — and I never saw any of the

ministers without hearing regret expressed at the Emperor's absence from the center of government; especially as the struggle went on, and became more violent, in the political world. Hvostoff's short term at the Ministry of the Interior, with its shameful record, dragged the car of state farther into the mud. Gorymékin finally left, because it became a necessity to recall the Duma he had dissolved, and he found his cabinet grown entirely unmanageable. The poor old gentleman could not change his views, though his service to the crown was above all question, and he suffered greatly. In February the Duma was reopened, and the Emperor, inspired with a sudden wish to make a demonstration towards his people's representatives, quite unexpectedly appeared at its inauguration. He came from the staff, and for the only time he showed himself in the house of parliament, where he was vastly acclaimed.

Stürmer, who was an unknown quantity, had just been named Prime Minister and given the portfolio of the Interior as well, replacing at once both Gorymékin and Hvostoff. It was hoped at first this meant a desire on the part of his Majesty to meet the people half-way, and it was said Stürmer was of moderate views; but soon it transpired, he was the nominee of the Empress; and he became immediately a weak instrument in the hands of the Occults. He was very ambitious for riches and social position and pomp; and he enjoyed extremely the prestige connected with his situation. Having no politics whatever, he was as wax in the hands of the conspirators, who had placed him so high, knowing this would be the case.

From our quiet hearth on the country estates, where

I spent the late months of the winter, I was only in touch with events by newspapers and such correspondents as I had in the capital. Their letters were full of frank anxiety, and I knew they felt things were not going well. In March I returned to town to find the tension vastly augmented. Everyone seemed to feel things were going badly, though on the surface all was still smooth. The struggle for power by the Empress's group as against the liberals was at an acute stage. Her Majesty's influence with the Sovereign was immense, and she threw it all into the scales in favor of the ministers who were with the Occults. Stürmer was admittedly her man, and trouble was brewing. Many strikes in the munition factories, fearful increase in the prices of food and necessities, great difficulties and misunderstandings between classes, poisoned the capital's mentality.

The liberal elements still had Sazonoff in Foreign Affairs, doing good work; and Bark that spring had put the new income tax through both houses of parliament. These two, with Pokrowsky as Controller of the Empire, were almost the only ones left of the better element in the cabinet; though Trépoff as Minister of Transportation was very energetic and honestly struggling, with some success, to bring order out of chaos on the railroads, and to feed the army, as well as carry the ammunition to it, which Polivanoff's care had at last brought forward in large supplies.

These were the conditions I found in Petrograd; and when, in May, Viviani and Thomas came on a visit of negotiation from our French Allies, and to gather impressions, they saw how the country and the government were laboring against great odds, to carry

on the war. Much entertaining occurred around these two distinguished Frenchmen; and I felt greatly interested to meet them, at a few of the political dinners. After their departure, Kitchener was to arrive; but to England's loss and ours, that great man was drowned on the trip over, together with O'Beirne, the eminent diplomat, who was Russia's true friend, after a residence among us of seventeen years. He spoke our language, and knew the country well; and he was deeply regretted by all our well-intentioned ministers, as well as by his many personal friends.

Then we in turn sent abroad the delegation from our parliaments. Protopopoff was a member of this, and it was the report he made to the Emperor, on returning from his voyage, which was the beginning of his meteor-like career. Pokrowsky also made his trip to the economic conference in Paris, and returned with his reputation greatly added to, while Bark's able negotiations during his hurried tour of London and Paris — in June and July — made him stronger than ever on his return. All efforts on the part of the Occult group to dislodge this capable minister miscarried. Someone said, "Bark did not resist his enemies, he simply ignored them." To the end of the sad reign of Nicolas II, this liberal-minded patriot remained a servitor to his Emperor and country, saving the finances from the wreck which overcame nearly every other department, and fighting with energy and bravery a losing battle in the cabinet, against the invasion of dark forces which caused the downfall of the Romanoff dynasty.

During the absence from Russia of Pokrowsky and

Bark, Sazonoff suddenly one morning read in the newspaper a "rescript" of thanks and dismissal, putting him out of the cabinet! Stürmer replaced him, to everyone's amazement, as he had had no experience or preparation for such a post. This should not have seemed so astonishing to us, as, for his other places, he had had no preparation either, but his nomination was a great blow to well-disposed subjects of the Emperor. When it was followed by the nomination of Protopopoff to the Ministry of the Interior (left vacant by Stürmer's move to the Foreign Office) there was a loud cry of indignation. Stürmer did not know his successor; but they were both placed by the same protection, and within a few weeks they had joined hands.

During the summer and early autumn, Raeff's nomination to the Holy Synod and Rein's to that of the Ministry of Public Health — created to make a place for him — were declarations by the Rasputinites of their intention to reduce opposition to them to a minimum in the cabinet-meetings. Trépoff, Bark, Pokrowsky and Count Ignatieff (Minister of Education) were the only right-minded ministers left, and all the efforts of the Occult group were directed toward dislodging these, especially Bark, whom the party wished to replace by a friend of Stürmer's, so that the government's millions could be used for the conspirators' necessities. This intrigue never succeeded, and up to the moment of the revolution their lack of money was a constant thorn in the side of Mme. Wiroboff's friends. The Minister of War, Polivanoff, was soon dismissed and Bélaeff, who owed his career to Souk-

homlinoff's protection, was put in his place. These were the men of the cabinet who were to face the Duma at its opening on the first of November.

Two or three days before, there was a great dinner given by the Prime Minister in his Foreign Office Palace. It was the old man's last day of triumph, as things turned out; and one realized from his agitated attitude how greatly he already feared the ordeal of parliament's opening session. He was nursing a foot which hurt him, that night, while his wife talked constantly of the fatigue from overwork which caused his suffering; and of her deep anxiety for his health. Everyone said she was paving the way for his non-appearance at the inauguration of parliament; and it was rumored that fearful attacks would be made upon him, and on all the government's policy, by indignant members of the Duma. I was disagreeably impressed at dinner, by the way our Allies' ambassadors treated our Premier and Foreign Minister — with ill-disguised disdain. The groups which after dinner wandered off to discuss things, whispering in out-of-the-way corners, gave one a creepy impression of danger and mistrust in the air. Everyone seemed anxious, without obvious reason.

The composition of the dinner, which was given for Count Motono, the Japanese Ambassador, was curious; and though I was greatly interested to see and know those present, I felt uncomfortable to be among them, almost ashamed. First, there was the guest of honor, whom I had met in these same great halls when he made his début in Russia years before — coming to represent his country and face a difficult situation, just after the Portsmouth peace. He had

successfully worked for Japan's interests through ten years; establishing such relations that now, instead of the enemies and hatred he had found, he was leaving with a feeling of good-will established, and he had a strong personal position. He had signed an advantageous treaty just recently with Sazonoff, which was almost the last official deed of the latter, and as the recompense for his long and brilliant service, Count Motono was going home in triumph, to take over the portfolio of Foreign Affairs in his own country. . . . The French Ambassador and the British, each very representative of his race, were there. They have now become historical figures: Paléologue, short, stout, dark and active, with quick repartee and clever face; Buchanan, tall, thin, cold and slow of movement, duly decided, and quite unchangeable of opinions. The American Ambassador, a débutant in diplomacy, and much interested in studying his surroundings, was also present. He had a fine physique, was capable, calm and of amiable demeanor. . . . These were the only foreigners.

Nearly all the ministers of our government were of the party, and I found them absorbing. Some, like Count Bobrinsky, I had known for years, and had often met socially. Others, I saw for the first time that night. Protopopoff was seated almost opposite to me at table, and I had an excellent opportunity to study him. Tall, slender, of some elegance of carriage and dress, there was, however, at times a sudden shambling of the head and shoulders, which suggested the possibility of a collapse or degeneracy, and made me remember he was supposed to be a victim of fits. He had iron-gray hair, worn parted, and very thick

and smooth; unhealthy yellowish skin; rather good features with especially large brilliant eyes; but the latter never looked straight at anyone, and roved constantly. His hands also were restless, and made aimless movements, as he talked and ate. With so much to make him good-looking, Protopopoff gave the impression of lacking strength and dignity, and after watching him a little one felt repelled, as if by something abnormal. His agitation was so great that I caught myself wishing dinner would end, and his fidgety presence be removed from my line of vision. Rarely have I seen any person so unattractive; and all the tales one heard of his dishonesty, treachery and cowardliness seemed to me quite credible after watching him through an hour.

In sharp contrast, next but one to him sat Bark — rather short and stocky, with broad shoulders, a squarely well-poised head, somewhat bald, but the well-domed forehead a marked feature. This, with a quiet serenity of the eyes, which were intelligent and humorous, and looked straight at one, and his strength of nose and jaw inspired confidence. Hard work of late, and strain of nerves, had told on him somewhat; and there were lines in the face which marked anxiety. His hands moved only when it was necessary, and then with precision and power, and they were large but extremely well-shaped. All he said or did was to the point. In his face and manner one read his capability, and the qualities that had caused him to occupy so high a place, and keep it, with the Sovereign's confidence, in the face of all attacks.

A little farther on, sat the rival Stürmer had chosen to replace Bark, and who had not yet given up hope.

He was eating little, and talking with great brilliancy. A sharp, mean, unscrupulous face, old, immensely intelligent, offering no promise of security, however, to an Emperor or a country whose treasures should be put into his hands. Then there was Count Bobrinsky, descendant of the great Catherine — the brilliant dilettante Minister of Agriculture — who said to me that very evening with comic despair, "I don't know why Stürmer named me to my place. Probably he could not think of anyone who would accept such a dreadful position. You can't imagine what it means now to be in the cabinet; and if I am not dismissed soon, I shall resign myself and go back to my collections." Count Bobrinsky had been for years director and curator of the Imperial archaeological researches and collections, and he was a most cultivated specialist in this line. Possibly Stürmer, knowing Bobrinsky had to do with the earth, had not realized the difference in his diggings and the plowing pertaining to agriculture, when he offered him Krivaschène's portfolio.

Old Countess Kleinmichel, an intimate friend of Stürmer's; Mme. Narishkine, Grand Mistress of the Empress's court, "sent with her Majesty's blessing to the feast," as some one naughtily remarked, and I, were the only women, except the wives of the cabinet ministers.

The host deserves special mention, for the prominence he had achieved was phenomenal. He was swollen with the pride that goes before a fall, was tall and of fine figure, in spite of his seventy years. He had white hair and beard, and might have been a striking head for a government, were it not that his face carried no conviction. The eyes were sly and

shifting, and the whole expression lacked dignity; while a somewhat over-flattering manner in conversation marked his insincerity. It was said of Stürmer's comet-like appearance in politics, that his was "not a career, but merely an adventure." Up to his nomination in January, 1916, as Prime Minister, he had never been well known; all his work had been in the provinces, and utterly insignificant. Suddenly called to handle an unruly cabinet and parliament, in a time of great tension; and to take over incidentally the administration of the Interior Ministry of the country — which had been a department going wrong long since — this old man was entirely at sea. He was no judge of men or of affairs, and had no knowledge of the special subject of which he had to treat; also he had neither tact nor instinct. He himself never showed the least surprise at being called to his post however, and he accepted the honors and benefits of his position with a childish delight in them that was really amusing. There were innumerable stories going the rounds of his naïve ways and sayings, and of the unexpected point-of-view he took. His palaces — he occupied and furnished three at the expense of the government in six months — were as much a pride to him, as his sonorous titles; and when he made quite unofficial calls, instead of being announced by his name simply, he always insisted on the butler's saying, "His Excellency, the President of the Council of Ministers!" The joy he took in telling how the Sovereign had chosen him in these times of difficulty to occupy "two places at once," was innocent enough; but, alas, in politics and in action he was dramatically insufficient. Immediately he was in the hands of the

Occult party, became a friend of Rasputin's, and conducted himself in such manner as to be accused with some appearance of truth of having treacherous relations with Germany.

A few days before this very dinner, his wife had told me, that, "of course the only thing to do now is to make peace; as all the country needs it, and wants it; and everyone is so tired of the war!" She was very much surprised at my holding a different opinion, and energetically expressing it; and my indicating that I thought her point of view remarkable, especially considering her husband's position, seemed to strike her as very strange indeed. She also then complained bitterly of the frightful strain to her "poor husband, who filled so many posts!" I don't know whether her conversation reflected Stürmer's ideas at that time or not; but at any rate it was generally said, he wished for, and was working for, a separate peace with Germany. His helplessness in presiding over the cabinet meetings never struck him, though it was a subject of current talk. Of course he had never had a possibility of comparison; but never did the cabinet meet so often as under his presidency. Whenever a minister came to him with a report, or to speak of a measure he wished to introduce, Stürmer immediately called a "meeting," fearing to give an order or opinion, or to make a decision, on his own responsibility. When the members of the government were assembled, he sat back vague and silent, unless he had been schooled beforehand by the man who had orginally come to him; and he let the other ministers fight out the question, or discuss ways and means, and traverse all difficulties, without himself taking any part.

At the beginning of his career, in his own Ministry of the Interior, he did absolutely nothing; and the chaos went from bad to worse. He never understood, and could not counteract, the acute conditions which were beginning to be felt all over the country. He vaguely suspected things were going wrong; and anxious to avoid the annoyance involved, he begged to have his portfolio changed to that of Foreign Affairs, saying that "for foreign relations, one need have no technical experience, if one had large ideas and a political program." In the Foreign Office he found an able staff, formed and trained by Sazonoff, and this somewhat replaced his own lack of ability. He often had a bad time of it however, and was constantly suffering defeats at the hands of ambassadors and representatives, with whom he had discussions. These failures he was far from realizing. Anecdotes multiplied, and would have been very amusing, if they had not put the country in such a tragic light. The scarcely veiled contempt of foreign diplomats, and the placid, arrogant satisfaction shown by Stürmer, were marked features of the group in which he moved. As one compared the atmosphere of his entertainment with those given in the same palace previously, one saw the decay of the government during the past months, and one trembled to think what suffering there might yet be in store for us!

CHAPTER VII

THE MURDER OF RASPUTIN

Three days later, November 14, 1916, the Duma opened. Up to the last moment a feeling of uncertainty as to whether it really would open at all reigned in St. Petersburg. It was said the Stürmer-Protopopoff group were frightened at the idea of facing the nation's deputies, and that they hoped to prevent parliament's meeting. On the other hand, I heard also that the liberal-minded members of the government — as also society, the provinces and the army — were all hoping the Duma's criticism would finally open the Sovereign's eyes to public opinion, and persuade him to overthrow the bad influences at work about him, once and for all.

I was going with, if possible, more interest than to that other Duma-opening, a year and four months before. But of how different a quality it was! My friends in the ministry were looking so preoccupied, and such hideous rumors were afloat, of dishonesty, both political and financial, of treachery and disloyalty, that there seemed little hope left of saving our government as it was. The night before the inauguration, it was suddenly officially announced that the Prime Minister and cabinet would not make the usual series of speeches, but that after Rodzankò's address they would leave the lower house, and go on to the open-

ing of the Council-of-the-Empire (or upper-house). The two ceremonies, which usually occurred at several hours' interval, were fixed this time for three o'clock at the Duma, and four o'clock at the Council; and there is nearly a half hour's drive between the Tauride and the Marie palaces! To make matters worse, the ambassadors were invited to one and to the other; and by special message from the Prime Minister, they were asked not to miss the later function. It was said the change of hours in the program was made, because Stürmer's foot was still very painful to him, and he could not stand the strain of such long functions; but neither the foreigners, nor any others, were the least taken in; and everyone realized that Stürmer and company knew what they deserved, and would get, and that they lacked the necessary courage to face the attacks of the deputies, so took refuge in escape, from answering for the acts which they had on their consciences. I ended by being so worried as to what might happen that I decided not to go at all. It seemed better to wait at home for news, which several friends had promised to bring me.

The next day it was about six o'clock before anyone appeared at my tea-table. Then came a diplomat or two, who had hardly realized the importance of what they had seen and heard at the Duma. They had not yet received the full reports of the understudies they had left in their places, when they went themselves from the lower to the upper house. Later, one of our cabinet ministers came in; and though I had never known him to show nervousness, I saw that for once his calm smile cost an effort. He was very silent, but admitted he thought the afternoon's

performance "had not left a good impression of the government." He, also, had not yet heard the reports of the session at the Duma, after the cabinet had left; but he told me the departure of the ministers had been painful enough in itself. From him, as much as this meant a grave experience; and I was not surprised to learn later, that as Stürmer rose to go, he had been hissed, and had retired from the hall with cries of "Down!" and "Away!" and "Traitor!" following him. There had been a most violent and open attack on Stürmer as head of the Imperial Government by the able deputy of the "cadet" party — right — Miliukoff, with humiliating accusations as to correspondence with Germany, and workings for a separate peace; and extracts had been cited from a German newspaper of repute, in which an editorial spoke openly of the Russian Prime-Minister as "our man," and of the "Deutschgemeinte Kaiserin" (German-intentioned Empress) who had put Stürmer in power to help her Fatherland. Also, there had been scarcely veiled allusions to her Majesty's part in politics, her protection of Soukhomlinoff from pursuit and punishment; not at all veiled criticisms of Rasputin, Rein, Raeff and Protopopoff, and statements of all the villainous machinations in their favor by the group of palace conspirators: Mme. Wiroboff, General Woyeikoff and their followers. . . .

That evening, where we dined, everyone talked at once; everyone was vastly excited; and everyone made predictions; and the most frightful pessimism reigned as — before, during and after dinner — a number of intensely patriotic friends of our hostess dropped in to tell what they had heard at parliament, or about

parliament in town. Each person expressed it differently, but all put into words the one opinion, that after this day's proceedings there were only two courses open to the Emperor: either he must declare the Duma closed, and punish Miliukoff for his conduct; or he must have the accusations investigated, and if found true, shut his wife up in a convent as a criminal, or in some villa at a safe distance as insane; throw the impostors she protected into prison; clean up the administration with the help of parliament; and reorganize all the country to prosecute the war with vigor and honesty; helping the suffering army with all the resources of his empire.

I have never understood how it could be so, but really nothing happened at all on the lines of these prophecies. I do not know whether the Emperor was ever given a true account of Miliukoff's and other speeches at that opening session. Things were so often kept from his knowledge that he may have heard only what the people surrounding him wished, but at any rate, nothing was changed for the moment. The Duma remained open, and continued applauding seditious harangues about the government and court. Stürmer remained a week or so Prime Minister, with all the conspirators still in their places. The Empress and Mme. Wiroboff directed their creatures more openly than ever, and the Emperor remained at the staff, so wavering and inert that the most terrible rumors were put into circulation about his incapacity for action. We heard that the Persian doctor, whom Mme. Wiroboff protected, was drugging his Majesty by degrees into imbecility, with the Empress's consent, so finally she would be able to announce his

inability to reign, put their son on the throne, and be herself the regent; also that she knew of, and encouraged, the Emperor's taste for drink; and that Woyeikoff had orders to ply him with wine, so her Majesty could manage affairs comfortably, at least until a separate peace should be arranged! A thousand tales such as these, floated about, and the reticence of loyal members of the court, and of the few ministers still remaining who were devoted, was considered to be a tacit confirmation. Nothing was stranger than the truth; for in spite of vile gossip, which went uncontradicted, all elements walked their appointed pathways without real change for some time; only the much censored newspapers — which, as one of the cabinet justly remarked, made excellent, clean, wrapping paper, except where advertisements were printed,— and the open talk of a probable revolution in the near future, which went the rounds, kept us at fever heat.

The Imperial family felt greatly disturbed; and the trips various ministers and Grand Dukes made to the staff, in hope of awakening the Sovereign to a full realization of the situation, were numerous. . . . Nicolas Mihaïlovitch, Kyril Vladimirovitch, and even the Empress Mother; the ministers Trépoff, Bark, and, very noisily, Ignatieff, went, explained, begged and prophesied. Each one was kindly received, graciously listened to; and each came home, believing he had succeeded, and that the tangled political knot would be at once straightened out. And then time passed again, and everything remained the same. . . .

I heard much of these journeyings; from relatives of the persons who went in several cases, and at first hand from the rest. At a luncheon at his mother's,

I sat next to the Grand Duke Kyril on November nineteenth, and he told me he had arrived in the capital from the staff, but an hour before. On my saying I feared he had brought sad impressions, he replied in a cheerful tone, "No, thank God! Everything will be mended shortly, and you are not to leave Petrograd, Princess, with a feeling of depression, for your winter in the Crimea. I was able to explain things to my cousin, and he understood so well, he promised me that Stürmer, Rein, Raeff and Protopopoff should go at once; and then everything shall be put into the hands of energetic men, who will honestly push the war." Kyril Vladimorovitch spoke with sincere conviction.

The Grand Duke Nicolas Mihaïlovitch, who had always been the "revolutionist" of the Imperial family, was not so satisfied with his reception at the staff; and it was he who, in fear for the dynasty, wrote to the Empress Mother, and persuaded her to use her influence in saving the crown, while there was time. . . . He also saw, and discussed the situation with, some of the ministers and liberals in the Duma, encouraging them to do what they could. Stürmer was dismissed finally, and we almost counted on some of the promises made coming true; but as the news of this, and of Trépoff's nomination to replace him reached the capital, the Empress ordered out her private train, and went to the staff immediately; accompanied, of course, by Mme. Wiroboff.

We heard the discussions there were long and very dramatic; and on her return, her Majesty told the Grand Duchess Victoria that she had been but a half hour too late to save "poor Stürmer from dismissal,

as the Emperor had already signed the rescript putting him out and Trépoff in his place; but, I luckily stopped all the other prepared changes, and upset the plans of busy-bodies, who from envy and lack of occupation, want to tear to pieces all the fabric of traditional autocracy in Russia, and then throw the power of the throne to a lot of howling disloyal liberals." The Grand Duchess protested, saying it was not at present a desire for liberalism, but, on the contrary, anxiety for the welfare of their Majesties and the country, which moved people; and that all of society and the nobility felt greatly disturbed. She, Victoria, knew it from many of her friends, whom she could trust to be truthful. Whereupon her Majesty displayed anger, and said, "If one listened to a lot of silly women, who gossip about in society, one necessarily heard nonsense;" and that she was better informed by her friends, who were of a different class and set, and who knew that the country had never been more satisfied than now or had more confidence in the government. The people would take no part in the noise a few hotheads were trying to stir up to give themselves prominence.

Soon all the population of Petrograd grew nervous. Officers told us a tremendous revolutionary propaganda was secretly being made among recruits and reservists who were coming into barracks, and they, the officers, were not able to discover who the agents were, or to prevent their action. It leaked out also that Protopopoff, with Stürmer's consent and help, had tried to obtain ten million rubles from the funds destined to war uses. He wanted to expend this sum without rendering account of it; and he had not suc-

ceeded in this, because of the timely and energetic counter-diplomacy of some of his colleagues; but being voted down and discomfited by them at one cabinet meeting, he had returned to the charge a week later with a signed order from the Sovereign, that 5,000,000 rubles were to be paid him unconditionally from the special fund of which his Majesty disposed without government control. This money was paid out to him, and was supposedly used for arming the secret police, whom Protopopoff was adding to. It was said he wished soon to provoke a revolution, so he could stamp it out, and could rise on a pinnacle of glory as the savior of autocracy; to be properly recompensed of course afterward. Thus there would be an excuse for any retrograde or severe measures the government might wish to inaugurate.

Trépoff, at the staff, threatened to hand in his resignation at once, which would be followed by those of many others, if Protopopoff were not removed. No decent man could serve with such a knave. The Prime Minister came back believing — as had Kyril Vladimirovitch — that all would be as he wished it to be shortly; but from his family I heard he had found the Emperor strangely absorbed, vague and detached; while from various other sources came the same report that his Majesty showed no power of will, and seemed to agree with the last person who talked with him, consenting to everything asked of him. It became uncanny; and certainly all the political life, at a time when so much energy was called for, stagnated.

I had asked for an audience of the Empress before leaving for the Crimea, and was surprised to be "commanded" to go to her at five on a certain day, with

my husband. Old Mme. Narishkine had just told me her Majesty was not receiving except on business; and my request had been made purely from a desire to show loyalty.

I found that we were to go in together — my husband and I — to the Imperial sitting room at Tzarskoe; and there was but one lady-in-waiting, who received us in a short walking costume and conducted us immediately to her Majesty's door, without the usual ceremony. Her Majesty, as we entered, was standing, dressed in her costume of a Sister of Mercy: all black, with white collar, cuffs, and headkerchief. She had grown very thin, in the six months since I last saw her; and her loss of flesh, together with the simplicity of her costume, augmented her beauty vastly. She looked worn and sad though, and very severe, except when she smiled; then she was briefly illuminated. She was gracious and cordial; altogether charming; and spoke with energy of the sufferings of all the allied countries — Belgium, France and Serbia, and our own, especially in its Polish provinces; and she spoke also of the absolute necessity of our going on to the end and winning the war.

She kept us sitting with her for about an hour; and embraced me upon my arrival and departure, though she knew me for no friend of Mme. Wiroboff's. I imagined her Majesty wished us to feel she was not for peace, or for Germany; as she spoke with touching care of the poor people all over Russia, and of how generously they were giving towards the war charities; and she made no criticism of any one, but was gentle in word and gesture. While with her, I was convinced that none of the accusations of evil inten-

tion, or of pro-German work on her part, were in the least truthful. In spite of her fine brain and nature, and strong will, she had through her illness, fallen completely a prey to the conspirators about her, who by degrees had separated her from all normal and truthful influences. They persuaded her she was the only one who could save Russia, and that the way they suggested was the only manner in which this could be done. They also succeeded in explaining away, or hiding, their own guilt; and in blackening to her eyes those who were not of their party. She never saw anyone at all who was not of this group. Her nervous pains and illness, the bad health of the young Grand Duke, her son; her difficulties early in her married life in understanding Russian society and our point-of-view; her mysticism and that of the Emperor, had all been used by Mme. Wiroboff to poison her mind completely against the people who should have been about her; and this designing woman had played on her Majesty's best qualities, and on her pride, making her feel abandoned, except by the conspirators. They dared now to do any harm; and they ruined their patroness, in their own avidity for importance and power. Though it is impossible to uphold the policy the Empress protected, or to express sufficient contempt for the people with whom she surrounded herself, I am sure that while doing so much injury, her intentions and ambitions remained noble. She seemed to me always as tragic and sorrowful a figure, as those in the background were criminal.

The Emperor's fête day, the nineteenth of December — Saint Nicolas Day — the Sovereign came home

to Tzarskoe from the staff. It was hoped and expected, his Majesty would on this occasion keep all his various and positive promises, and remodel the government on decent lines. Otherwise, it was known Trépoff would leave the cabinet, with several colleagues; probably all those whose honesty, loyalty and patriotism were being outraged, and who consequently would not consent to stay in bad company any longer. The Grand Duchess Elizabeth, elder sister of the Empress, and widow of the Grand Duke Serge (who had been assassinated while Governor General of Moscow in the 1905 revolution) arrived from Moscow on the morning of December eighteenth, to spend two or three days at Tzarskoe. While her people were unpacking the baggage of the Grand Duchess that afternoon, they were amazed suddenly to receive orders to cease this, and repack with all haste, as their mistress was returning to Moscow that same night. A stormy interview had occurred, during which she (the Grand Duchess) had thrown herself on her knees to the Empress, and the latter had answered her with great violence, defending the intentions and devotion of Mme. Wiroboff and Rasputin, and also their political program, which now her Majesty had made her own. Finally, she had ordered the Grand Duchess to leave the palace, not to return under any circumstances; and the latter was going. . . .

The nineteenth passed. As usual, nothing occurred; and everyone gave up all hope now of improvement. It was seen that no matter what promises the Sovereign might make, they could not be carried out. The Duma had been closed, with an announcement — in which

no one believed — that it would be opened again in January. Everyone was talking wildly, and anxiety and indignation had reached the limit.

When I arrived in the Crimea, I found at first the quiet country life delightful by comparison with the capital's mental atmosphere. But soon I discovered that all letters from the north were severely censored; and the papers were allowed to contain so little concerning politics, that the very scarcity of news made one restless. It was disquieting to learn that the Grand Duchess Xénia, the Emperor's own sister, was no better informed than I was; that her letters, even from the Empress Mother, and from her brother-in-law (Nicolas Mihaïlovitch) were constantly tampered with by the secret police. This seemed to indicate that everyone was subject to the suspicions of the conspirators at court; and their group must feel very strong thus to insult personages so near the Emperor himself. Quite openly, everyone talked of probable uprisings and assassinations, brought on by the complete surrender of the Emperor into the hands of his wife and her friends. We opened our daily papers in an ever-increasing fear of what news we might find in them. The Emperor's uncle, Paul Alexandrovitch, and his brother, Michael, both went back to Petrograd from the Crimea soon after our arrival there, to be nearer the center of interest; and the poor Grand Duchess Xénia planned a trip to her city home for the holidays.

I saw much of her in these dark weeks; and she roused all my sympathy by the weight of care she bravely carried, and by her anxiety for the safety of her brother and family. She fully realized the dangers ahead, yet could do nothing to save those she loved.

ПРИКАЗЪ
АРМІИ и ФЛОТУ

23-го августа 1915 года.

Сего числа Я принялъ на СЕБЯ предводительствованіе всѣми сухопутными и морскими вооруженными силами, находящимися на театрѣ военныхъ дѣйствій.

Съ твердою вѣрою въ милость Божію и съ непоколебимою увѣренностью въ конечной побѣдѣ будемъ исполнять нашъ святой долгъ защиты Родины до конца и не посрамимъ земли Русской.

Николай

The Emperor's "*prikaz*" to the Army and Navy on taking personal command. The Emperor added in his own handwriting a prayer for God's protection to Russia

In fact, it was her son-in-law, young Prince Youssoupoff, who opened the dramatic action of the revolution, by killing Rasputin with his own hand at a supper-party given for that purpose in his Petrograd palace. This hideous business, planned and carried out in cold blood, made a sensation impossible to describe, all over the country. . . . Everyone breathed with relief at Rasputin's disappearance. Some openly hoped it would lead to a series of murders, including Mme. Wiroboff's, Protopopoff's and even their august protectress', as these crimes would finally rid the nation of tyranny, they said, and save us from a bloody revolution, otherwise inevitable.

Some few optimists hoped that once their "prophet" was gone, the clan of evil-doers might fall to pieces, and the Empress's eyes be opened at last to their sins. But it was just the opposite which happened. Rasputin had never been the brains of his party; only a mask behind which the real conspirators hid themselves, and his sudden death turned him into a martyr, as well as a saint, in her Majesty's eyes. The ex-"followers" made much of his remains, which were brought with great honor to lie in the chapel of the Tzarskoe Palace, where night and day the women of his group watched and prayed by them. Then he was buried in the Imperial park, and a daily visit was paid the spot by the Empress, always with Mme. Wiroboff, and sometimes accompanied by her daughters.

Meanwhile, Protopopoff announced (with great presence of mind) that Rasputin's spirit had descended on himself; and he constantly and suddenly exclaimed, while talking to her Majesty, that he saw Rasputin leading her; or that he saw the Christ standing behind

her, holding out his arms in blessing, because she had befriended, protected and honored the saintly apostle Rasputin had been! These tales were current gossip, and seemed to be founded on truth, as I received them from some of the palace ladies, afterwards upheld by a quite different source of information — one of Protopopoff's colleagues in the government. Stories of the same variety were told me also by a court gentleman, frequently near the Empress; and, crazy as they would seem, it became possible to believe anything, when one learned day by day of the path the Sovereigns trod quite openly now. The Grand Duke Paul's son — the Grand Duke Dimitry — and the Grand Duke Nicolas Mihaïlovitch were implicated in the Youssoupoff plot; the latter as an adviser and abettor, the former as having actually lent a hand in the performance of killing Rasputin, and of getting rid of his body. Both were banished from the capital immediately; Nicolas to his estates in the provinces, and Dimitry to the Persian front, without any of his own household to accompany him, and with Count Koutaïssoff, named by the Empress to be his severe guardian during the long trip.

Both departed at once, and the Grand Duke Nicolas sent his resignation to the Emperor, left his Majesty's suite, and removed his aiguillettes and uniform, once and for all. This very able and brilliant man did not reappear in the life of Petrograd, till just two months later, when his sentence expired, on the eve of the revolution. During that dangerous period he held out a helping hand to many a poor Imperialist, saving lives, both in and out of the government, by his influence with the revolutionists.

CHAPTER VIII

THE LAST DAYS OF AUTOCRACY

About this time occurred several incidents which marked the turn the Empress's resentment took at the killing of her "prophet." Princess Sophie Vassiltchikoff, a woman above reproach in word or act, and of great name and fortune, who in the early years of her married life (by reason of her position, beauty and intelligence) was much associated with, and appreciated by, the young Empress, took it upon herself to make an appeal to the latter, and to open her eyes to the terrible harm to herself and the country her Majesty was bringing about, by protecting and encouraging so much evil. The Princess one day wrote a letter of some length, as from woman to woman, explaining the late events, and their real causes frankly, imploring the Sovereign to save herself, the Emperor, the dynasty and our great country from thereatening destruction, by looking at her associates and protégés without prejudice, and judging their actions and ambitions as they should be judged. This letter was dispatched directly to the Empress by a trusted messenger. It reached its destination so safely, that within forty-eight hours Princess Vassiltchikoff was banished from her Petrograd home to her estates; and her husband was ordered to resign from the Council of the Empire, and his other various positions in the government Red Cross organ-

izations, and to go with her. This charming couple were received by the populace in their provincial retreat with acclamations of gratitude and admiration; and they, like the Grand Duke, lived quietly in the country till the first days of the revolution, when they promptly reappeared in their old haunts at Petrograd.

Another marked case was that of M. Kauffman-Turkestansky, who, as one of the most distinguished members of the Council of the Empire and a leader in the national Red Cross work, had for his diplomatic talents, been permanently attached as representative of all the Red Cross organizations to the person of the Emperor at the staff. His years, fine record, absolute loyalty and great ability, had given him an exceptional place among the officials at headquarters, and in the Sovereign's esteem. He decided after much thought, as his rank and personal situation put him above suspicion, he would throw all his weight into a protest to the Emperor. The only result was that he found himself degraded from all his honors at court, dismissed from the staff, and, giving his resignation, he also retired with great dignity to the country.

These two departures from their midst raised much energetic protest in the Council of the Empire, and the Sovereigns were so angered that shortly, by Imperial edict, ten or twelve more members, suspected of harboring "liberal" opinions, were summarily dismissed from that body and were replaced by protégés of the Occult party. The president of the assembly was arbitrarily deposed, and in his stead Schéglovitoff was nominated by Imperial edict to the position, and every possible arrangement made to strengthen the support which the Occult party hoped to find in the upper

house of parliament, in case of trouble. Admittedly Schéglovitoff had great talent; but he was so unscrupulous as to have been for a long time the brains of the Wiroboff party, and to have hoped for the place of Prime Minister if this group were successful. The Empress had wished him to take that position on Stürmer's retirement; but for once someone else had dominated the situation for a moment, and Trépoff was named, before her Majesty had reached the staff. So now, by way of consolation, her candidate was given the presidency of the Council of the Empire.

Time after time Trépoff went to the staff, during his short premiership, threatened to resign, and again pleaded with the Sovereign — whom he hated to abandon — for definite action. Finally, he gave his resignation, as none of the conditions promised him had been fulfilled during the month he had been in office; and Prince Galitzin, elderly and entirely respectable, totally ignorant seemingly of any difficulty in his path, also ready to do anything he was told, was shoved into the seat of Premier. Count Ignatieff, who had made a reputation for himself as a most intelligent administrator in his Department of Education, and as having introduced several successful school reforms (which roused the hopes of all those interested in our people's educational improvement) now gave his resignation, following Trépoff's, and for the same reason — that he would not work with a cabinet in which Protopopoff held a portfolio, and in which the line of action taken meant the ruin of our country. The Emperor sent for him, and did his best to persuade him to remain at his side, pleading the interest of the good he could do in the cabinet, and the dramatic dif-

ficulty he, the Sovereign, was facing at this crisis. Ignatieff had been known to the Emperor for years, and had been treated always with an amiability shown to few. The Emperor called him by name, and they were of about an age and had many memories of old camaraderie in common; but Ignatieff remained obdurate now, and definitely abandoned the ship of state. Even after leaving he made much talk as to his reasons for his action, which some people criticized.

Pokrowsky, ex-Controller of the Empire, had been recently transferred by Trépoff to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, vacant by Stürmer's departure. Though not a professional diplomat, his experience at the economic conference in the past summer and his Parisian early life and education made him familiar with most of our international questions. He was able, consequently, to fill the difficult place with success; and he was always considered a patriot; careful, honest and strong; and was equally esteemed by Russians and foreigners. He and Bark had resigned at Christmas, a week or so after Trépoff. Pokrowsky, I think, gave no reason, and Bark's was his ill-health. Unofficially, everyone felt their real motive was the same as Ignatieff's. The Emperor called them to him, and appealed to their loyalty, asking them to remain in their places, at least till the end of the inter-allied congress (which was to be held in January in Petrograd) as in different departments they had each begun, either in Paris or in London, the negotiations which were to be continued and finished now. Sazonoff was named their colleague for these sittings; and to the Emperor it seemed most important our Russian interests should remain in these men's capable hands.

Both Bark and Pokrowsky were good subjects, and though filled with sorrow by the terrible situation in the government, they felt in duty bound to save the reputation of Russia, vis-à-vis of her allies; so they consented to withdraw their resignations for the moment, begging his Majesty to accept them to take effect only as soon as the international conference should be finished. Meantime, Bark made his remaining "officially" at his post, conditional on his being allowed to count himself as if on a leave, motived by his failing health. This would put the routine work of his ministry, and the occupancy of his chair at cabinet meetings, in the hands of his assistant, and he would be free to attend only to special questions momentarily of greater importance. At the end of December or the beginning of January, he had floated a large war-loan; and the public, for the first time, had mistrusted one of his measures, having lost confidence in a government which was reported as going to ruin, and where no minister wished to remain.

I returned to Petrograd soon after the New Year, remaining there four weeks on business; and I was perfectly shocked at the changes I found. The cost of living was much higher. No one had any confidence in the future of the government. General depression was extreme, and very contagious, since one heard the most sober and reliable people stating facts which did not seem believable, but were nevertheless quite true. The silence and the anxious faces of members of our court and government, who were the most loyal, were perhaps those marks of coming downfall that struck me most. Officers from the front, and those of the Petrograd garrison, were equally disturbed over the propa-

ganda everywhere among their men. They foresaw uprisings, which it would be impossible to quell with the town troops; and also the probable contamination of any regiments brought from the firing line to handle political troubles at home.

We believed the Grand Duke Nicolas's prophecy was coming true, and that our soldiers and people could not longer be forced to defend a government of which so much evil was commonly known. Long lines of the poor stood waiting hours to receive insufficient rations of bread and other necessities; the weather was exceptionally cold — twenty or thirty degrees below zero — and fuel was scarce; everyone was suffering, and there were continuous strikes and great discontent. It was said openly, this was all the result of grafting by certain members of the government.

Society's tongue was let loose, with all barriers broken down; and stories, harsh and tragic, were told in every salon. Some few of these may have been exaggeration, but most were unfortunately only too easy to believe; and many of them came to me at first hand. Mme. Wiroboff had completely dropped her mask of humility, except in the presence of the Sovereigns: and she gave, I heard, official audience to all sorts of shady people, who were her coöperators or instruments. She spoke openly of how she had done or had decided this and the other measure; and she used the term of speech, "*We* shall act about that as *we* see fit," as if she were at the head of affairs. She dared any arrogance, sure of her hold on the Sovereigns now. I took great pride in having, for so many years, avoided all relations with her, and of having never called upon

her, save the one time at the opening of the war to ask officially for my work.

Protopopoff had allowed all administration connected with the country's interior to remain in abeyance: and he occupied himself only with the secret police, into whose ranks he was enrolling every imaginable corrupt and rotten element, as they were the only ones who would now consent to serve. Also, a whole department of his ministry was employed writing forged letters, which were sent to agents all over the country for re-mailing to the Empress. These epistles, written in primitive style, and with spelling and writing so incorrect as not to seem suspect, purported to be from soldiers and peasants. They assured her Majesty of the profound and loyal devotion the poor and humble elements of the people felt for her; and of their gratitude that she had joined hands with their saint, Rasputin, in reacting against the bureaucracy and liberals in favor of the old-time patriarchal, autocratic manner of governing. The writers ended in lamenting the saint's terrible martyrdom and death, and in calling upon the Empress to honor his memory and continue bravely on a course that would draw to herself, more and more, the adoration of her subjects. Protopopoff thus encouraged his Sovereigns to go on towards the yawning precipice with unfaltering footsteps, leaning more and more on his advice, and seemingly upheld by the vast majority of the inhabitants of their realm. Old Count Fréedericksz, Minister of the Court, had, at the risk of his situation, tried to warn the Emperor; and to speak against Mme. Wiroboff again, as well as against her party. He was told by

the Ruler to go and speak himself to her Majesty, and the old courtier had the courage to do so; but returned home broken in spirit by the indignation he had roused. He learned from her, she was convinced she knew much better than he, who Mme. Wiroboff was, and what associates she had; that she, the Empress, would choose her own friends now as always and meant to defend them only the more warmly, the more they were attacked.

There were séances of table-turning as much as ever at the palace, where Protopopoff managed to be constantly, either by his own request, or by "command." Rasputin's spirit appeared to the minister, and indicated by word of mouth the program for the government to follow. Thus the opening of the Duma was delayed until the last of February; and only did it meet then, because Protopopoff feared the threat made him by its members, to the effect that if longer held off, it would meet, with or without permission; and it would be the worse then, for such influences as had worked against it.

Attempts were made to injure all who were suspected of being against the Occult conspirators. Rumors were put afloat that the Grand Duke Nicolas Nicolaïovitch was doing very badly in the Caucasus, where he was supposed to be constantly drunk, while the military and civil administrations were being put into the worst of hands. Spies were kept busy at Tiflis watching the old Chief; and his mail and orders were read and reported upon secretly; but nothing worked against him, for the simple reason that he was adored there as elsewhere, and all calumnies only enhanced his

dignified ignorance of them, and his double distinction of military success and uncomplaining martyrdom.

The days of the international conference at Petrograd came and passed, and the foreign representatives returned to their homes with many delicate questions settled to the satisfaction of all parties; and they were greatly pleased with the reception given them. It seems amazing to me that men of such exceptional ability as were several of those who were members of this mission, should have remained blind to our interior situation, as their reports proved them to have been. Especially, is it amazing, when one considers they had within consulting distance Sir George Buchanan and M. Paléologue, both of whom had spent years among us, and were perfectly informed as to all the occurrences and currents of the moment; knowing even all the gossip that was circulating. I imagine the two ambassadors felt very strongly about the various parties at court; for, though they were always perfectly discreet in society, each of them had confidants, and the latter were less inclined to keep secrets than were their principals. One diplomat's sentiments were exhibited by his wife to several people at this time. I, myself, when calling one day on this lady, heard her speak of the difficulties of the times, the augmentation in cost of living, and so on, and she went on to say, "But really, what can you expect when the party in power is a Germanophile party, led by a woman not normal, who is in the hands of the enemy, and working for them? It is really terrible about the poor Empress, you know; and all those horrible creatures about her! I am sure if no one does anything

about it there will be a revolution one of these days!" This last in a threatening tone, and settling her skirts with great energy.

As I was the wife of a general in the Emperor's suite, I felt obliged to react to this speech, which sounded strange from the wife of an Ally's representative to our court; so I responded with all due show of esteem, "Why surely, dear Lady ——, you don't believe all the gossip you hear? One must not, you know. We don't; as for instance, there are rumors being floated that your husband was mixed up in Rasputin's murder, and we don't believe that; so you must not accept as truth all that the busy-bodies say of us Russians at court. We are not half so bad, really, as we are made out to be."

My hostess changed the conversation immediately, and we talked of the beautiful Order of St. Catherine with which the Empress had decorated her recently; and in which she took great pride, in spite of her criticism of the donor; and then we went on to other subjects. I frequently saw Lady —— afterward, and we remained always on excellent terms, but she never referred again in my presence to the Empress, or to her group at court.

About this time I heard from a friend of Sir George Buchanan, to whom the latter had told the story himself that same day, that the ambassador had asked his government's permission to go to our Emperor and tell him of the state of things, asking his Majesty to break up the clan at court which was doing so much harm, and to invite the Empress to retire, and rest somewhere, far from the stress of the capital. He wanted also to beg the Sovereign to do away with all

the conspirators, to meet the better element with liberal tendencies half-way, and to push the war to a finish, hand in hand with his Allies. Sir George told my informer he had underscored to his government the fact that many Russians had already done what he proposed to do, with no other result than their bringing about their own disgrace; and though he thought a protest from the Allies would carry more weight, than from the Emperor's own subjects, he felt his chance of success was uncertain. In case of his failing, relations might be very strained between the countries; therefore he did not dare act without orders. He had awaited the reply from England for some time. When it came, it was that he would be allowed to act as he thought best; but he was to act in an *unofficial* capacity; and in case of failure the British Government would not uphold him. He had thought the matter over and had decided to try, knowing that he was going to tempt fate, and probably pay the penalty by being dismissed from his great post; but he said, he was old and ill anyhow, and if success attended his act, he would have done an enormous good to the Allied cause; whereas his failure meant only the sacrifice of his personal career. So he asked an audience of the Emperor, was received most graciously, and laid the whole case, as he saw it, frankly before him. The Sovereign had listened quietly, shown no sign of annoyance, and after some conversation, had said good-by in the same even manner. For days after hearing this tale, we thought either that through the Foreign Office our Emperor would ask London to recall the British Ambassador for his presumption, or else, he being at last convinced by an outsider's atti-

tude towards the Empress, her Majesty and a group of the latter's friends would be sent away to some health resort, leaving the political world to better hands. But absolutely nothing occurred. Sir George remained in Petrograd till six months after the revolution, and the Empress and her party continued in charge, till the end of the old régime. Probably our Sovereign by this time was so in the habit of warnings, that he never gave Sir George's a second thought, and did not resent it in his own mind, or even mention it to the Empress or any one else.

All through January, I heard that Sir George Buchanan was interested in the probable revolutionary movement; that he was seeing much of the liberals, and that English agents and money were helping in making a propaganda. I did not believe this then, considering it to be one of the many rumors, each wilder than the other, to which the strained nerves of society gave credence.

A full year later, however, I sat at an official dinner in Copenhagen, next to a compatriot and intimate friend of M. Paléologue, who had been in correspondence with the French Ambassador to Russia during the months preceding our revolution. Naturally our conversation turned on that period, and I asked what had been Paléologue's real opinion; and what the part he had played in these events?

M. —— answered that Paléologue had known of the brave effort of Sir George, and he went on to say that Paléologue had written to him of this with admiration, since it was evident Great Britain's representative was risking his position on the mere chance of helping the general good cause. "After this effort

to separate the Empress from the government of Russia by sending her to the French Riviera, which was the place chosen so we French could see to her comfort, and she would be in safety, the roads of Sir George and Paléologue had separated; as *France had always considered her alliance was with the Emperor,* and consequently her policy through her ambassador must be to stand with the autocracy, whatever its movement, without deviation." "And England's?" I asked. "England's?" he replied, and smiled. "Why, Princess, Sir George Buchanan, when he found himself unsuccessful in causing the Empress to depart, took the other road, probably feeling that the revolution would be the only salvation for our cause in the war. It was here that he and Paléologue parted company, and saw things quite differently, acting from diverse principles. We were heart and soul for the Czar, and felt to uphold him was to our interest and the only course possible; though once the revolution was an accomplished fact we necessarily acknowledged the provisional government."

So much for the actions of the Allied ambassadors, as described by their friends.

Lord Milner, Dumèrgue and the others of the conference gave no sign of lacking trust in our words, or in the situation; either while they were there, or after they returned home from Petrograd. Our Russian representatives must have been greatly relieved when the conference was over, and the load of responsibility was taken from their tired shoulders, about the beginning of February. Then, to everyone's amazement, instead of resigning as they had announced their intention of doing, without explanation Pokrow-

sky remained in his Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Bark, though seriously ill, returned to his desk in the office of the Finance Ministry. It was simply that both men were certain that within a few weeks they would see a terrible crash; and they felt their loyalty would not permit them to abandon two important departments to strange, weak or treacherous hands at such a moment. Most of the ministers, I heard, were approached, some time before the revolution, by a liberal group, who thought measures must be taken to save our nation's honor in connection with the war. The Duma's members threatened, in case they were not called together or were dismissed, that for once they would not obey, but would meet, voice public opinion and force an issue. The commandant of Petrograd was demanding troops from the front; and orders were published for this and that division to be sent to the capital. In each case the orders were contradicted and others published, for different units to replace those previously indicated. Among these, my husband's division was actually entrained, and its baggage and provisions loaded, when word came the orders were rescinded, and they were to remain where they were — on the front in Southern Poland.

Everything was conducted in the most haphazard and disorderly fashion. Protopopoff's aids at the Ministry of the Interior resigned, and nothing was done to help the distant provinces, where railroads were scarcely working, and where there was great misery. Everything was tied up, and individual business, the army and the whole nation were suffering dreadfully. We heard that now Protopopoff scarcely left the Tzar-

skoe Palace, madly the " spiritism " sessions continued. Quite openly people said, " It is not enough to have killed Rasputin, it must be the Empress also, and all her party; and there should be a proper guardian for the Emperor, with a responsible government!"

It got about that a palace revolution was being planned, where assassination would clear the way for a new era. Everything else had been tried, to no avail; and this was the only remaining remedy.

" They seem there at Tzarskoe to be completely demented," said a most quiet and loyal member of the cabinet one day with a sigh; " and they don't see they are going rapidly to their destruction. On the contrary, they grow dizzy, and hurry; pulling, dragging, pushing one another along."

And really one had the sensation of insanity in looking at the situation. When I was leaving for the Crimea again, at the beginning of February, I said to M. Bark, " I leave you still in power. When I return in April shall I find you so?" He looked at me with an expression of great sadness, grown habitual now to his previously cheerful face, and replied, " I should be glad to leave, but cannot do so now. Something ought to be done, either one thing or the other, if the government is to survive, whether in autocratic or in liberal form. But nothing is being done, and everything is being decided backward and forward. I fear you will soon hear bad news of us. I hope and pray not; but I feel it is very probable. You have many friends whom you will not see again when you return; and I am glad you are leaving for a quieter place, and a safer one." His foreboding was so dreary, and he

seemed so sincere in the fear and regret he expressed, that it rang in my ears, far on the road to the sunny southern land.

Again I found there the poor Grand Duchess Xénia, more than ever alarmed. I lunched with her immediately upon my arrival, and she made me give her all the details I had gleaned from every source, asking with emotion what I had heard of this one, or how that one felt and stood. A few days later she, being unable longer to resist her desire, went north, remaining there through the week of the revolution.

CHAPTER IX

THE REVOLUTION

My husband joined me for ten days in the Crimea, coming from the front, while his regiment was put by in a small town back of the firing line to rest, recuperate, and feed their horses. He reported conditions in the army were very bad — fodder for the mounts and food for the men growing scarce; clothes difficult to obtain, even for the guard regiments, which were much better served than the poor men of the line. And he said also the feeling was anxious there and wild reports from the capital were coming out, making people nervous — both officers and men. Soon he departed for Petrograd, where he was to meet his mother on some business for the eleventh and twelfth; and then he was to return to his command, in time to go under fire again, on the eighteenth of March.

By telegram he arranged to stop at the staff on March fourteenth for an audience with the Emperor.

I had two letters from my husband, sent back to me as he went northward to Petrograd; and then a dispatch stating his safe arrival. After that no news till Tuesday, March 13; when a telegram came, saying "all the family are well"; and that my mother-in-law had moved to her daughter's, Countess Niroth's home. This seemed eccentric, as the Princess had had an apartment of her own at the Astoria during the whole winter.

This was followed by daily wires from my husband, saying "all were well," and adding in one, that my boy "had moved to the Niroths' also," while Michael himself was detained in the capital!

By Saturday morning I was thoroughly disquieted. The northern papers had not arrived for several days past, and no news came save the reassuring telegrams as to the health of all the family, and recording the perplexing moving of the Princess and my boy from their normal habitations to my sister-in-law's. It was too mysterious; and I felt anxious at my husband's being detained in the capital, when I knew he meant to reach the staff on the fourteenth, and his regiment on the seventeenth. I became so puzzled that my nerves got the best of me, and I decided to make a day's expedition into Yalta, stopping on the way at the Grand Duke Nicolas' place, Tchaïre, to see its beautiful gardens, and talk with his Imperial Highness's intendant, a gossipy old acquaintance of mine.

We started early, and the drive through the beautiful morning somewhat calmed us. When we reached Tchaïre I was in better spirits; but the old intendant met me with an air, as if he were about to weep, and said, "Has your Highness heard the terrible news?" . . . I felt on the verge of fainting at this, and with visions of crimes and murder, I asked impatiently what had occurred. He said he knew nothing, save that the telephone girl at Yalta told him, "the Emperor had abdicated, with the Czarévitch, and that Michael Alexandrovitch was declared Emperor."

"And our Grand Duke?" I asked. "Alas, I know nothing, your Highness, but they tell me he is going to the staff again, to command; but our Emperor is



The Cantacuzène Villa on the Black Sea

gone, and I cannot understand! Perhaps it is worse than that! They know so little at Yalta."

My interest in the gardens faded, and we at once regained our carriage and started for our goal with utmost rapidity. As we drove into the town of Yalta, people were buying sheets of telegraph bulletins, and then standing transfixed in the middle of the street reading them; so astounded they seemed of stone, and we nearly ran over several, who did not hear our driver's shouts to clear the way. Of course, we stopped our trap; bought telegrams, too; and read the Emperor's last sad proclamation, from Pskof; his abdication in favor of his brother — of his own rights to reign, and those of his son. It was a beautifully-worded document, containing no protest and no complaint, saying the act was for the good of the country and begging all officials, both civil and military, to remain at their posts and serve their country, defending it from the foe. Deep tragedy in the last words of adieu and blessing. I wondered if he felt relief to lay down his burden at last, and to rest after so long and dreary a reign. "Where do you suppose the Empress was?" said my companion, one of my sisters-in-law, who was excited almost to hysterics.

There followed in the telegrams an order to the Grand Duke Nicolas to go at once to the staff, and a telegram saying he had already left Tiflis; and there was evidence of a "provisional committee" in some orders sent from Petrograd to the local Crimean authorities, but without explanations. The Emperor's abdication was dated March fourteenth, and its being neither from the capital nor from the staff seemed incomprehensible. Why had the Sovereign gone to

Pskof, unless he had fled for protection to General Russky's headquarters? What was occurring in the capital and at Tzarskoe? Something dramatic, or my husband would not have wired me so regularly they were all well. No one knew anything in Yalta, so perforce we awaited news with what patience we could. And meantime it was curious to observe the psychology of the people about, with reference to the great event.

The town which had been the favorite residence of our Rulers, and where they had built a magnificent white marble palace, where they had moved about among the people as they did nowhere else, and had naturally brought money into everyone's pocket — this town showed no regret, and gave no word of pity to the Emperor and Empress. The Emperor's portrait disappeared from shop windows and walls, within an hour after the reading of the proclamation; and in its place I saw by afternoon pictures of Michael Alexandrovitch. Flags were hung out, and all faces wore smiles of quiet satisfaction. "It was very bad; now it will be better," was the general calm verdict. The supposition of a constitutional monarchy was the accepted idea. Everyone rejoiced that the much-beloved Grand Duke Nicolas was back in his old place; and they commented on his courage and patriotism being finally recognized, and on the fact that at last historical justice was being done. Either the Sovereigns were not mentioned at all, or some remark with reference to them showed no love was lost; and I heard many say slighting things of Mme. Wiroboff or of Rasputin. Then faces would grow soft again, as people expressed pity for "the poor children," or sympathy with "the old mother, our Empress, for whom

it must be sad to live through these events!" It was a curious and eloquent contrast between the hardness towards the Imperial couple and the humane feeling for these others. The next few days we lived in a state of impatience for news; and our anxiety for those we loved, who were in Petrograd, augmented constantly. Letters from my husband, my mother-in-law, the Niroths and my boy, and letters and telegrams from a number of friends who had thought of reassuring me, soon gave me first hand and rapid information, which was supplemented later by what I was told by word of mouth. The letters were all forwarded me by a messenger; so that after being deprived of certain knowledge, I was suddenly supplied with a feast of information, and many details from actors or eye-witnesses of the occurrences in the north. In spite of my pity for some, and my solicitude for others, I was carried over this terrible period by my intense interest in the immensity of the historical facts. They lifted me quite above the actualities and dangers of the moment, in the wonder of what the future would bring Russia. As for our own personal fortunes, they seemed to be greatly threatened.

It was very curious how each character in the drama became accentuated by the light of the new situation, and yet remained true to its primitive qualities and defects. It was so from the first to the last man or woman who played a part, beginning with our Emperor.

The feeling that the revolution was a certainty of the near future had roused in some ministers a desire to resign, and get out of the way; while others, who had already taken this measure, picked up their burdens again, judging it dishonorable to abandon a sinking

ship. I expressed later my surprise to Bark that in this he had not held to his decision, but had re-attached himself to a banner he knew doomed, when he had the excuse of having settled his line of conduct at the beginning of the new year. He smiled at my argument, and said that he did not fear what might come, as far as he personally was concerned. "My reputation is what it is already, and cannot be changed much by a last act. I may be useful now, to the slight extent of preventing my department's going to pieces, when the expenses of war, and our obligations abroad and at home, are so serious. Anyhow, in present times one man's life is of no importance. The only way to judge such a question is to be very simple, sifting out the few really important points and holding on to them, letting side-issues go. In my life my work has been the mainspring, and I cannot let go of it in the hour of upheaval. What honors and advantages I have enjoyed I owe the Emperor, therefore I cannot leave him in the hour of his danger. It is a matter of work and loyalty now, and not of political principles, to my mind."

I had no talk with Pokrowsky, but his acts proved he was of the same fine material as his colleague in facing the crisis.

The Emperor had come from his staff when parliament opened; but his Majesty did not visit the Tauride Palace. He only was within reach of his ministers, in case of necessity.

All went quietly; in fact, people became nervous over the very calm, after so many threats had been uttered. They felt it was ominous. After some days had

passed, during which speeches from the discontented deputies filled the Duma's sessions, the Emperor decided on his return to the staff at Moghileff. Before departing, he called his cabinet together. It met, with his Majesty presiding, on the afternoon of Thursday, March eighth, as it turned out, for the last time in the history of the autocracy.

His ministers in concert decided on a desperate effort; and they talked frankly to the Sovereign; explaining, with a heat of eloquence they had never reached before, the dreadful dangers hanging over Russia. They spared no argument which might strengthen the cause they advocated — some from a desire for their own safety, some because of their political principles, and some from pure devotion to their ruler. So long they spoke, and so fervently, that before the Emperor left the council chamber he had promised them he would sign two edicts before his departure for the staff; one granting the responsible ministry which the Duma was demanding; and the other — to be offered as a free gift from him, if the first seemed not enough to quell the storm — was to be an edict bestowing a constitution upon Russia! This last was an almost unhoped for concession.

The orders were given for those two edicts to be written out in due form, and brought that same evening to Tzarskoe for signing, and his Majesty bade his ministers good-by, leaving them with the sensation that at the eleventh hour the ills of our much-abused country were to be healed; that the Duma would soon be carrying with themselves the terrible weight of the responsibility, which up to now had been only upon

their shoulders. They could trust to fate that the first act of the new era would be Protopopoff's departure from their midst.

When his Majesty returned to the palace, he naturally told of the great decision taken, and that he was giving way in this to the ideas of his cabinet and the Duma, upheld by his own convictions. A dramatic discussion ensued, and lasted all evening. Protopopoff, who had come with the papers to sign, being of their party reinforced the Empress in her violent denunciations of the folly of men who offered such counsel to their master.

Should it be said in history that Nicholas II weakly gave way to the pressure of cowards, who wanted him to sell his birthright and his son's? Could he think of it — he who had inherited his great throne and the autocracy intact?

His Majesty listened, answered, and listened again, while the Minister of the Interior spread out his own program before him. It was easy to believe that what always had been, must always be.

The people were with the throne, and had no desire to govern, but loved the old patriarchal system with a "Little Father" at its head. Did not the Empress receive daily hundreds of letters, from peasants and soldiers all over the realm, assuring her of their felicity, their devotion and admiration? She and the Emperor still believed these to be real proofs of fidelity from their people, and did not know they were productions of one of the departments under Protopopoff's orders.

If there was a revolutionary movement, it would be local to the capital, and the Minister of the Interior promised to handle it alone, with his own police, re-

inforced only by the city's garrison. His Majesty could go to the staff with a quiet mind, and fear nothing, leaving the situation here to his devoted servant. At the most, General Ivanoff could be sent to the capital, with a few picked men to uphold the government's courage, at the critical moment.

The Empress could give any necessary orders, and all would go well. Then her Majesty used all her talents to strengthen the policy advocated by her protégé; and before morning, the two promised edicts (prepared that afternoon) had been destroyed, and were replaced by a signed blank, put unconditionally into Protopopoff's hands. Also, permission was given him to tell his colleagues at his own time of their Sovereign's change of mind. Then his Majesty departed for the staff, as planned, on the following morning, March ninth.

That day, Friday, there were strikes and bread riots in some of the outer suburbs of Petrograd. The former had been occurring for some time; but now, with the dragging of the winter, and the increasingly intense cold, the workmen were growing ugly; and the crowds of poor who stood for hours in the street, waiting their turns to buy insufficient bread, were ready to show violence at the slightest opportunity.

Saturday there was more trouble, and it grew nearer to the center of the town, and included some encounters with the police and shooting. The ministry believed all would soon be well, and its members were secure in the Imperial promise — supposing the edicts which were to mend matters would be published that evening or the next morning.

Sunday, the eleventh, appeared in the papers an Im-

perial proclamation over the Emperor's signature; but not that which was expected. This one *dissolved* the Duma! . . . The latter, in closing its session twenty-four hours before, had announced the following one for Tuesday (the thirteenth) in perfect confidence.

Everyone was thunderstruck! The ministers, all except he of the Interior, were completely astounded, and for a moment, without any comprehension or explanation of what had occurred. To plan and prepare a measure so wise, and then follow it by this act, was dementia; and without warning them!

That day was one of heavy, angry silence. In the streets no tram-cars, almost no sleighs or autos were in circulation, and few people walked out. In various directions shooting was heard, and sinister rumors floated about threatening law and order; yet nothing could be done. . . . Rodzanko and the members of the parliament were deeply disturbed. They had heard from friendly people associated with the ministry, a suggestion of the success that had attended the cabinet's protest on Thursday; and the promised satisfying message from the throne was hoped for, as the last possibility of preventing a revolution, by putting in the wrong all the secret agents who were fomenting disorders — and who were supposedly either German agents, or those of Protopopoff. If they could have managed to bring about a responsible government, in association with a liberal Duma, all the well-disposed elements (even of the working and soldier classes) would have certainly upheld it. And now this proclamation, spelling defeat for all the liberals' hopes, came on them like a thunderbolt! To mend things seemed past praying for, and the Duma, like the

cabinet, felt trapped and sold to the enemy. If there were any conversations that day among leaders, they were of a private nature; and, as far as the public knew, Sunday passed in a dull heavy depression, while the storm clouds rolled up, to break into the worst tempest the nation had ever known on the morrow.

Yet honest patriots were not idle. Such men as Rodzanko, Miliukoff and Goutchkoff had the pulse of the country in their hands. They jumped to an exact conclusion as to what had occurred and wasted no time reproaching their friends in the government, for they knew these were as faithful as they to the empire. They wished to prevent anything that would disorganize the machine for war beyond repair; so after a consultation, Rodzanko sent a first telegram to the Emperor.

No one knew what the next hour might bring forth in the sorely tried city; and coachmen and chauffeurs feared life on the streets. It was said the garrison was contaminated, and General Engelhardt, the commandant, was at his wit's end, though he showed himself brave, and made the most of his slender resources for defense; for which attitude officers under and about him admired him greatly.

" It is the beginning of the revolution," everyone said, and waited then with true Slav fatalism, knowing the régime to be doomed!

Monday morning, the twelfth, it had come. The town was in an uproar; public buildings were burning; there were encounters in the streets in every direction between the still loyal troops and the revolutionists; wild shooting on all sides. The cabinet met, and having news from the staff that General Ivanoff was ar-

riving by special train with eight hundred picked "St. George cavaliers"— soldiers decorated for some unusually brave feat in battle — to take command as dictator, the members limited business to putting out from their midst, by unanimous vote, Protopopoff. I think this must be the first time in history, a minister has been dismissed by his colleagues. Then they wrote out their own resignations, to be sent collectively to his Majesty, and to take effect as soon as possible, which could not be, however, till these were accepted, according to Russian tradition. During this session at the Marie Palace, there was fighting in several adjacent streets; and on St. Isaac's place in front of the palace, a vast surging mob made a demonstration, demanding that Protopopoff, "the traitor," be handed over to it. The latter, who was so bravely going to stem the torrent of any public demonstration, broke down completely at the meeting. Cringing, he begged the protection of those he had injured, as the mob approached, and he tried to hide, running to various parts of the building, weeping, and finally losing his head completely, fleeing in a motor to the house of Mme. Wiroboff's other protégé, the Persian doctor Badmaeff. Here he remained until late in the week, when, the revolutionary government being formed, he threw himself on Kerensky's mercy, coming to the Tauride Palace of his own accord.

The other ministers one and all remained calm at the Marie Palace and went, after their morning's work, on foot through the streets to their homes, and returned for the afternoon session in the same manner; or else remained at the Marie Palace for luncheon.

My husband met Bark near the club at noon, and

took him in there for a few minutes, to avoid the bullets flying about, while the minister told him news of the whole cabinet's resignation. Each of these men afterward said to me, how cool the other had seemed; and each admitted that circulating on the streets that day — with troops firing volleys up and down, revolutionists firing wild shots from revolvers, rifles, and machine guns mounted on motor trucks, and the secret and ordinary police firing from the housetops and windows — was far from a pleasant pastime.

The Hotel Astoria, opposite the Marie Palace, was shot at, and sacked on Monday by the mob. My mother-in-law, who was living there, luckily escaped with her maid and small dog, to the home of my sister-in-law, a few blocks off; but all the windows of her rooms were smashed, and I counted later twenty-seven holes in her walls where bullets were lodged. The ministers at their session of Monday afternoon, decided they could do nothing further in the present crisis, and that their only duty now was to remain at their ministries, till they should be relieved by the Sovereign's order, or forced away by the revolutionists. They hoped this last might not occur, but within two days nearly all had been arrested. . . . The Duma met early Monday morning, spontaneously, in extra session. The members were drawn there doubtless by a common anxiety, and the desire to confer upon what measures, if any, could be taken to restrain or direct the troubles. Many deputies had hoped and wished for a revolution, perhaps even planned it; but all of these had desired a dignified palace performance, kept well in hand, and managed by their own group, with a well-disciplined and grateful nation to uphold them,

and with applauding Allies looking on. They were not ready yet, and were shocked and frightfully upset over the dangerous situation developing. Singing, howling mobs of workmen, and regiments of soldiers poured into the Tauride Palace and its garden, purporting to be friends of the Duma; but their wild shouts and violent behavior showed them to be unreliable, and highly inflammable, ready for anything. Rodzanko and other leading men met and discussed the situation. Then they acted with consummate adroitness and presence of mind. They made speeches to the populace, using their eloquence as never before, to quiet wild elements, who threatened to swamp them, and who had now settled in permanent session in the Catherine Hall — the great ballroom of the ex-palace. Kerensky, the socialist, was drawn into Rodzanko's group; and with his then sincere enthusiasm, he undertook the task of quelling this bedlam. He managed to do so amazingly well; and that the Duma was not massacred, it owed to his eloquence. Having a name and personality well known to the masses, and a large sense of patriotism also, he had been given over completely the mission of handling the rabble. Time after time, during fifty-two hours, pale, uncombed, unshaved, his clothes in disorder he was pushed forward; and he shouted and gesticulated himself into a state of exhaustion. He always finally succeeded in taming those whom he addressed. Then he would collapse with fatigue and be cared for, until he was sufficiently restored, to go on with his special work again.

Rodzanko, in spite of the injury he and his followers felt had been done them, telegraphed in most respectful form, for the second time, to the Emperor, giving

him the history of events in town, urging the extreme danger, and asking for instructions. This telegram went over the Emperor's private wire, was taken down by the operator at the staff, and delivered instantly to General Woyeikoff's secretary, Colonel ——. The latter said to my husband afterwards that he took it in person to Woyeikoff, who decided it was not worth while delivering it to his Majesty, and agitating him! Probably he had been instructed by Protopopoff. So life at the staff went on that day, in the usual quiet and monotonous routine.

The Empress, in the evening, spoke to her husband directly by private wire from Tzarskoe, saying that from the palace she could see a fire or two in Petrograd, and that she heard there were some insignificant disorders there, which the police were handling capably. She was pleased to think Ivanoff would soon arrive to take command; and then she went on to give her husband news in detail of the children's health and of the palace life. Mme. Wiroboff and her confederates had not seen fit to disturb their mistress with the truth, if they knew it, any more than the Emperor at the staff was favored with information of what was happening! That night the two Sovereigns were probably the only people in their neighborhoods who slept unconscious of danger.

Rodzanko's telegrams on Tuesday, of which he sent two more, were grown quite terrifying in their note of warning. He said it was now too late to do aught but face events; and that not having received orders, he would be obliged to act on his own responsibility. . . . Woyeikoff was at last frightened, and took three telegrams — after the arrival of the second

on Tuesday — to his Majesty. The latter read them, was silent for a moment, staring at them and at Woyeikoff uncomprehendingly. He said he did not understand how this could be, when Protopopoff and all had assured him there was no real danger. . . . Then perhaps it dawned on him, that those in opposition to his favorites had had truth on their side. A sharp exclamation of anger escaped him; and peremptory orders followed, in a voice which made Woyeikoff move rapidly, as if driven by a whip. "If Orloff had been here this would not have occurred," heard the favored Woyeikoff; and what hurt his pride more, was that others heard it too.

Did his Majesty think of the ill-treated Grand Duke also, and his trusty sword; which was now no longer near to protect him? With rapid preparations the Imperial train was made up, and the Sovereign started for his capital within two hours; early Tuesday evening. He expected to arrive there on Wednesday morning, March fourteenth, and he wanted to go straight to Petrograd, and face parliament and the people. But his advisers begged him to return first to Tzarskoe and summon the cabinet there, while just before his starting, an anxious wire from her Majesty called him also, for her protection, as she said; the population was making demonstrations, and the situation in town seemed acute, while Rodzanko had not answered the order she sent him to come to her at Tzarskoe and discuss what should be done; and she heard shooting in the capital, and saw masses of flames.

The Emperor took with him only his immediate household for the trip, Woyeikoff in command of

course; and orders were given by wire all along the railroad line to clear it, and let the Imperial train through with utmost rapidity. But the night was young yet, when Woyeikoff was awakened by the train-master, anxious, because he found he could not reach Petrograd by the usual quick route, "the line being blocked ahead." He wanted orders. Woyeikoff, roused to the danger and the importance of time, had the train switched to another longer road, which it seemed was clear; and he retired to bed again, bitterly thinking this change meant the loss of several hours, and that they could not be at Tzarskoe now before late the next afternoon.

Wednesday morning came, and they ran into the station at Pskof, and definitely stopped. The officials at this station informed Woyeikoff they had "orders from the chief of transportation, not to let this party proceed farther." I believe it is not on record, how the commandant of the palace translated this curious news to his Imperial master; nor what the latter said of such a situation!

General Russky, who was in command at Pskof, presented himself. He was sent to telegraph over his staff wire to Rodzanko, in the Emperor's name, asking for news, and telling of the actual predicament of the Imperial traveler. Russky came back to say that the president of the Duma had formed a "provisional committee," which was trying to handle the situation in the capital; and that he had already sent two deputies to meet his Majesty. They would reach Pskof that evening, to confer with him.

Till their arrival the Emperor spent much time in walking on the station platform, from which the

public was not cleared away, but where people stood about watching him. He also talked with the Empress by private wire from Pskof. Her Majesty gave descriptions of what she saw from her windows. She seemed courageous and cool, and was mainly preoccupied by the condition of her children, who were all down with measles, one of the little Grand Duchesses and the young Czarévitch being seriously ill.

That evening late, the expected deputation arrived from Petrograd. It consisted of Goutchkoff, afterward Minister of War; and Schoulgine, editor of a very brilliant paper in Kief. General Russky accompanied them, and remained in the Imperial salon-carriage during all the historical interview. It was the first time in the life of Nicolas II he had received anyone who had not dressed in full uniform (civil or military) before entering his presence. These men came as they had been on their trip, and indeed they had probably not re-dressed since Monday morning, when they had gone to the Tauride Palace.

In attendance on his Majesty were old Count Fréedericksz, minister of the court; General Narishkine, head of the military bureau; one aid-de-camp, and probably General Woyeikoff. The Emperor received the envoys with calm, and when they were seated asked them to state their business. They did; first reciting the history of events since the Imperial departure on Friday morning, and telling how just now they had left the capital in an uproar of battle; the government powerless, since nearly all its members were arrested; the mob in the street ready to burn and sack the city; and the troops, now having

all passed over to the revolutionists, leading in the disorders. They said the Duma had met and formed a provisional committee, being unable to hear from the Emperor; and that this handful of men were now struggling to bring chaos to an end, and to find a solution for the many difficulties. Ivanoff and his followers had been stopped, and their train not allowed to enter the city; and there was no knowing what might happen to her Majesty and the Imperial children, or to the country, unless the Sovereign made up his mind to the only step left him,—that of abdicating the throne, allowing the Czarévitch to replace him, with a regency of the nation's choice to conduct affairs.

The Emperor listened, showing no temper, regret or surprise. At the end of their speech he declared that he refused the succession for his son, not wishing to separate himself and the Empress from their boy. He said he would abdicate his rights, with those of the Czarévitch, in favor of his brother Michael. The deputies consented to this, and gave him a paper to sign, which had been prepared beforehand on these lines. With no show of emotion, the Emperor took the paper and moved into the office next his salon, leaving all the company behind him. In a few moments he returned, with a typewritten sheet in his hand, presenting it to the deputies to read. He asked if it was what they had wished. Upon hearing their affirmative, the Sovereign put his signature immediately to the document, with the same self-possession; and the paper was countersigned by Count Fréedericksz. As he handed the proclamation to Goutchkoff the Emperor asked the deputies what he

should personally do for the moment. They told him that he was entirely free to return to the staff, if he so desired.

This plan was carried out as soon as his unwelcome guests had departed. Amazing calm had been the Emperor's attitude. Helpless in the hands of conspirators till now, the Emperor was apparently equally unable to resist these new dominating spirits; and he neither protested nor complained at his fate, nor showed the slightest desire to defend his inheritance. On the contrary, he gave in at once, without argument; and did with precision as he was instructed. He seemed to be entirely content to feel he might now lead a quiet life, and was to be free from his burden of state affairs; and it never occurred to him to order these deputies arrested, or make any other demonstration of self-defense. A symptomatic detail is the fact, that though he again conversed with the Empress by special wire from Pskof, after the departure of the Duma's deputation, and before his own, the Emperor did not mention to her the fact of his abdication!

At the staff, the Emperor had left the supreme command to General Alexéeff — his chief-of-staff till now — and he did not take the command again, nor return to the palace he had occupied in Moghileff. He remained on his train, which was drawn up near that of the Empress Mother, who had joined her son from Kief on hearing the news to offer him the comfort of her presence and affection.

Four days they spent in this manner, the Emperor enjoying entire personal liberty, driving about the town with her Majesty, and dining or lunching with her, or she with him. Woyeikoff tried, without success, to

abandon the Sovereign, and get himself transferred to the suite of the Empress Mother, which he considered would be safer. Finally this unfaithful servant fled, and was arrested near Moscow on a train and brought to Petrograd, where he was interned in the fortress of Peter and Paul by the revolutionaries.

One of the Empress-Mother's gentlemen-in-waiting told me in detail of these sad days they had spent at the staff; of the gentle bravery of the great lady, her tender solicitude and her self-control; also, of her son's inertness in the face of changes he could scarcely ignore. At the church he heard the service read, with his name and those of his family left out; but he made no sign. At meals also the conversation went on much as usual. . . . The fourth day it was announced to him he must consider himself under arrest, and must proceed to Tzarskoe with a deputy of the Duma, who had come to fetch him as his guardian. With the same inconsequence he heard the sentence, made his adieu to his mother and to all his own suite, and then departed for his palace of Tzarskoe without a word of regret, or a wave of his hand to the tender aged figure in black, the Empress-Mother, who with a breaking heart stood alone, and watched his train disappear in the distance.

On this trip, the Emperor was accompanied only by Prince Dolgorouky, who had been for years his companion, and of late had been made his marshal of the Court, and who had asked permission to share the Sovereign's fate. The Duma's representative, and a military guard completed the passengers of the special train. . . . The Emperor had heard of the arrest of his wife, and had since then been unable to commu-

nicate with her, but his Majesty seemed to feel no anxiety for her, any more than for his own fate, and everyone who saw him, wondered if he at all realized the danger of their situation. On his arrival in Tzarskoe, he was driven in a closed motor through streets filled with untidy signs of the revolution, with people and soldiers crowding, and at liberty to stare and even attack him if they chose.

Arrived at the palace, in spite of the fact that both Sovereigns were now prisoners, they were allowed to see one another at first tête-à-tête. . . . It must have been a tragic interview when they faced one another, and contemplated the hopelessness of their situation, together with the reasons that had caused this drama! But one of Rasputin's old predictions was, that if anything happened to him, disaster would overcome the Imperial house, so perhaps his patroness still believed in her prophet; and possibly she explained to the Emperor that the death of their inspirer had cost them their throne. Perhaps the fallen autocrat, on the other hand, explained to her Majesty, that there had been other and various reasons for the disaster.

At any rate, a day or two later Kerensky, who was Minister of Justice in the new-born provisional government, came to the Tzarskoe Palace to ask of the Emperor some needed information and papers. He was cordially received by the Imperial prisoner, in the latter's library, and they were seated, smoking and discussing some details, when Nicolas II said, "I regret so much, that I have never met you until now! It would have helped me greatly if, during my reign, I had known men like you, and had been able to introduce such elements into the government!"

Just then the ex-Empress walked into the great room silently. Kerensky rose at once, and the ex-Emperor presented the socialist to his wife. The minister kissed her hand, and drew up an armchair for her, near his Majesty's. "You need not offer me a seat in my own palace," she said; and stood in continued silence by her husband's side. Her proud spirit was far from broken; and soon the new government felt obliged to separate the couple; allowing them to meet only at meals, and with a revolutionary officer present to watch them and follow the conversation even then.

"She is too strong, and he is too weak," was the explanation given me, when I asked why the new government had taken this measure.

CHAPTER X

THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT

Each time after the Emperor's departure for the staff the Empress knew only what her chosen group told her. Long ago she had separated herself from all other people, punishing with banishment those who warned her of dangers ahead. Therefore, as she sat through Friday, Saturday and Sunday at her children's bedsides; or worked in her hospital, and read, knit or talked with Mme. Wiroboff, she was free from alarm about the continued " slight troubles " she heard were still occurring; and even the sight of flames on the horizon, where Petrograd lay, failed to upset her. At last, she thought, she had obtained the right to govern; and she felt with Protopopoff's help she could save the autocracy and the country; putting down the rebels, and the liberals once and for all.

In memory, she lived over the long fight she had waged to reach this point; and how, by her husband's mistaken kindness, she had seen so many false steps taken, which must be retraced now; but with the Emperor at the staff in safety, and attending only to his military interests, she could show energy. And the first measure she planned was the closing of the Duma, definitely and permanently, since its members did not realize their debt to the crown, but continued clamoring. Protopopoff had once been vice-president of the

parliament for a short time, and he must know the situation well. What an advantage for the country, that at this moment she was able to save the services of such a minister to the nation! . . . So the Empress spent her first days of power, resting her faith on her false adherents, believing all would be well; and on Monday when the revolution broke, she never for a moment felt it was through her own folly, the catastrophe had been precipitated. She was helpless, of course; deserted by those she had trusted, and with her natural protectors scattered by her own wish; and all she knew of the drama, was what could be seen from her windows: flames and smoke, together with a restless crowd at her gates, and rumors which reached her by indirect channels.

Between the Empress and the dangers of mob-rule stood a dozen men at most, leaders in the Duma, with all the elemental passions of a revolution seething up about them. But they had on their side the fundamental good-nature and the patient qualities of the Russian people, with its gentle idealism and faith; and on these traits they counted and worked as best they could through the long tense hours. By Monday evening, all the troops in the capital had passed finally over to the revolutionists, with or without their officers, many of whom had been killed for their loyal resistance.

The parliament was in perpetual session day and night, eating what could be brought to the halls from outside, while various university students of both sexes came as volunteers to serve these vague meals, with the inevitable tea and cigarettes. Also, they cleaned up in spots when it was possible. Goutchkoff was

doing heavy work with reference to all the military questions. Miliukoff put his great brains to solving problems as to foreign relations and aspects of the situation. He saw the British and French ambassadors, and consulted with all sorts of people in the intellectual — or " intelligencia "— circles. Prince Lvoff arrived from Moscow; and representing the " zemstvos " (the rural-district-organizations) he inspired everyone with courage and confidence. Young Téréschtchenko came, and gave ten millions at once to help in immediate financial difficulties. . . . After living thus through thirty-six hours at the Duma, early on Tuesday, Rodzanko had wired twice to the apparently inert Sovereign that his cabinet, helpless in the situation, had collectively resigned; that the garrison of his capital had joined the revolutionary movement; that the whole city was up in arms; and finally, that, having as yet no orders from his Majesty, he — Rodzanko — and the Duma, had formed a " provisional committee " to do what could be done for law and order. It was too late now to more than face events, and act on the inspiration of the moment. That evening, at last, came a wire announcing the Emperor was starting for the capital.

Wednesday morning the arrested members of the government — ex-ministers, generals, and all sorts of well-known retrograde men, as well as members of the Empress's party — were being brought into the Tauride. Also, there came, with his marines, the Grand Duke Kyril Vladimirovitch, while as if by magic, the Grand Duke Nicolas Mihaïlovitch appeared from his banishment, wearing civilian clothes, offering help and advice, and saving the liberty and life of

many liberal patriots of the old-régime party. He had just returned from the exile which had been meted out to him immediately after Rasputin's assassination.

By Wednesday noon, Rodzanko heard the Emperor's train was stopped at Pskof; and he communicated with General Russky over the latter's special wire. Two members of the Duma — Goutchkoff and Schoulgine — were immediately sent to meet the Sovereign, carrying the Duma's demand for his abdication; and the strain on the provisional committee was increased by a new anxiety as to what the Imperial reply would be.

In the small hours of the morning, the situation was relieved somewhat by the deputation's return with our Emperor's last proclamation in their hands; and after reading it aloud to the ever-present multitude, Rodzanko published it throughout the city, and placarded it on doors and on walls. It said, freely translated:

To prevent the enslavement of our country by foreign enemies, we are still fighting a war which has already been proceeding for three years; and God has now seen fit to visit a still further trial on our much-worn Russia. The indication of internal unrest among the people threatens to reflect unfavorably on this war to protect our frontiers. The fate of Russia, the honor of our heroic army, the happiness of the Fatherland, make final victory vital to us. Our cruel enemy is exerting his final efforts against us; and already the hour draws near when, thanks to our army, in company with our Allies, the enemy will be brought to his knees.

At this decisive moment of the fortunes of Russia, we find it our bounden duty to take such steps as will enable our people to attain the unity of purpose and

power, indispensable for the earliest possible conquest of the enemy; and in accordance with the advice of the Imperial Duma, we abdicate from the throne of Russia, and renounce the high powers attached to that office. Not wishing to part with our beloved son, we pass the succession to our brother, his Imperial Highness Michael Alexandrovitch, with our blessing on his accession to the Russian throne. We command our brother to govern the country in strict accordance with the wishes of the ministers who are to be chosen by the people; and that he swear this oath for the sake of our dearly beloved country. We also command all true sons of the Fatherland to fulfill their sacred duty of obedience to him as Czar, in this dire moment of the troubles of our nation; and to help him and the people's representatives to guide the Russian Empire to victory, happiness and success. So may God help Russia!

NICOLAI.

Early on Thursday morning a committee waited on the Grand Duke Michael. In this group were Goutchkoff and Kerensky. The Grand Duke was offered the throne, as by his brother's proclamation; but it was said he declined the proffered honor, under pressure from the deputation, who did not want him to reign He announced in a proclamation of his own, made public that same day, that he would accept the crown only if he were "elected to it by the people's vote in a constituent assembly."

It was immediately decided to form a provisional government to carry on the war and the administration of the country, till an assembly could be brought together; and the choice of the people made known, as

to what form of government they desired for permanent use.

That same Thursday a ministry was named. It included all the best liberal thinkers and theorists available. It put Prince Lvoff at the head as Prime Minister; Miliukoff took the portfolio of Foreign Affairs; Téréschtchenko and his millions were set to guard our finances; while Kerensky and his idealism occupied the chair of justice. Nearly all the men in this cabinet were honest; and they were inspired with a fine ambition to set the country on its feet. The American ambassador, Mr. Francis, knowing their value, was anxious to strengthen their position; and he obtained by Saturday evening, the recognition of the provisional government by the United States. England and France followed the example of the United States almost at once, and by Monday evening, the new chapter of Russia's history was begun, and quiet reigned again in Petrograd.

The revolution had lasted but a week. When the old ministers had been arrested, none of them had been seriously ill-treated, though a few had suffered from exposure to the cold, or from the hardships of poor lodging, and inconvenience. The ministerial meeting rooms in the Duma were used to contain all the prisoners, whom the self-appointed revolutionary guards had arrested and brought in. There were an extraordinary number scattered about the rooms, where they were detained a few hours or a few days, after which they were liberated, like Bark and Kotschoubey; or turned into the Fortress of Peter and Paul for a more permanent sojourn, as were Soukhomlinoff and Protopopoff. The latter suddenly appeared about Thursday

at the Duma door, asking for Kerensky. At once he was shut up in the "ministerial pavilion," but he stayed there only about thirty-six hours. During this time he was granted his desired interview with the new Minister of Justice. I heard that in that conversation Protopopoff tried to save his own life and liberty, by incriminating the ex-Sovereigns; but as it turned out, to Kerensky's credit, he went to the fortress himself, and his information was not used against his Imperial ex-employers. Someone, who was in the same room with him at the Tauride, told me that Protopopoff wept and whined over his fate during the whole of his stay; and that he showed himself as entirely selfish as ever, a disloyal and arrogant coward.

Soukhomlinoff had a trying experience at the Duma, and was threatened with immediate death by the soldier-mob, before his guards could bring him into the pavilion. Till he and Protopopoff were taken to the fortress, it was felt their presence endangered the lives of the whole group of prisoners, as well as those of the parliament members. Kerensky guaranteed, however, that these men should not escape judgment for their crimes, and they were not torn to pieces, though Soukhomlinoff's epaulets were actually dragged off his uniform. Old Stürmer was early captured and brought in, tremulously begging for protection, on the score of his age and ill-health; and he kept asking, "Who will answer to me, that I shall not be beheaded here?"

Gorymékin, somewhat infirm in body and in mind, was of a different type; and over his morning costume he had put the grand-cordon of an order given him by the ex-Emperor. He remained dignified and calm,

in his bearing, even in his tragi-comic get-up. He was brave, and loyal to his first principles, in spite of tottering faculties, and was soon liberated. Meantime, he sat smoking endlessly, patiently awaiting his fate, with the remark constantly repeated, "It was natural I should be made a prisoner in case of revolution."

Senators, members of the council of the empire, members of the ex-court and the government, about two hundred of them, lived in these crowded rooms for five or six long days. The prisoners were kept constantly on the qui vive, as each morning and evening Kerensky made a tour of the rooms, chose out a few men to be liberated, and a few more to be sent to the fortress. At one side of the impromptu prison could be heard the discussions and the movements of the Duma's members; while from the other direction, came the roar of bedlam let loose, for in the Catherine Hall the deputations of soldiers and workmen held forth — criticizing, threatening, acclaiming; and demanding reports of all that was being done, and the right to veto or approve every measure presented. Many times, the lives of all occupants of the palace hung by a thread; and always the situation was saved by Kerensky's eloquence, and his clever handling of his clients. When he accepted a portfolio in so conservative a cabinet as was the provisional, he almost lost his hold on the ultra-Socialists, who feared he would no longer be their man. The first days after his nomination, as he circulated among the prisoners, he was attended by a "guard of honor," one soldier, one sailor and one workman, as aids-de-camp; but he said afterward, these had really been spies, placed by the Catherine-Hall crowd to watch

his words and movements. During this time, he was severe and curt in manner with the prisoners, but as soon as he became free from supervision, he was quite unpretentious and human; trying to help and to liberate all those he could.

Certain prisoners had experiences that were curious and most contradictory one to the other. Bark, the ex-Minister of Finance, brought in on Wednesday morning by drunken volunteers, and turned into a room with five other pensioners, was at first reviled by passing workmen and soldiers, as a member of the old government "who had stolen the people's money." His friends in the Duma were greatly distressed to see him arrive, feeling it would be very dangerous to offer him protection; but by degrees the guardian students and the soldiers standing about found out his name, and they announced it was by his advice that vodka sales had been suppressed at the outbreak of the war, and also in part thanks to him their revolution had been a success, and was orderly to a degree they could be proud of. Then one student asked if he played chess, and invited him to do so with him. They became friends, and this valuable protector allowed the minister to send home for a few necessities — linen and some books. Soon it was discovered (so his guardians told him) that "he was a man like the rest of us," and he was treated accordingly — perhaps because of his being a graduate of the university and a self-made man. At any rate, Saturday, when it was announced he was liberated, because Téréschtchenko "had asked for his advice and help in directing the ministry of finance," there was a small demon-

stration of enthusiasm and regret at parting from him, which must have touched the prisoner greatly.

A similar case was that of Prince Victor Kotschoubey, who was of the highest aristocracy, rich and powerful in his own right, and brother-in-law of Orloff. To everyone's surprise he was liberated after a few hours at the Duma; and not only that, but he was asked to continue in charge of his department, until it should be liquidated, and the fortune of the Imperial family turned to government uses in the Ministry of Agriculture. He was given carte blanche as to the time this would take, and the best arrangements for carrying out all measures in his department, which had been the "ministry for the administration of all the Imperial estates and Crown-lands." Both Bark and Kotschoubey had been friends of the Grand Duke Nicolas Mihaïlovitch, and I accused the latter one day of having given them his protection, which he laughingly admitted he had done. "For them I did the impossible. They are too valuable to lose."

Hundreds of prisoners were set free immediately after their arrest, as my husband was; while others lingered many days; and a number ended up at the fortress, dragging out a miserable existence for months. None was actually executed, as one of Kerensky's first measures was the suppression of capital punishment.

CHAPTER XI

THE ARREST OF THE EMPRESS

My husband, who had gone to Petrograd on business, had reached the capital on the morning of Sunday, March eleventh; and finding all traffic stopped, and no means of locomotion, save his own feet, had with his soldier servant, Davidka, carried their light baggage across the silent city to his club. He said everything looked ominous to him; the town dead; and that he found his friends at the club greatly excited, and concerned for the safety of the city. It was reported the revolution would be upon them in a few hours. Michael saw his mother and family that day; found the former much worried, and he decided, that because of the threatening disorders, our boy should not return to school, as was usual, on Sunday evening.

On Monday morning, when the revolution broke out in earnest, with shooting growing more violent all over the town as the hours passed, circulation in the street, even on foot, became almost impossible. For part of the day my husband watched some of the troops, who still held with the government, fighting masses of workmen; and other troops already passing over to the crowd. But they were all only reserves, or new recruits, living in the barracks of the regiments whose names they bore, and whom they expected to join shortly at the front. In their actual

state, they were not well-disciplined units, for after nearly three years of war and subterranean revolutionary propaganda, the patriotism of these second-rate soldiers had for months been gradually sapped away. The officers in charge were few, and were entirely helpless against the agents scattered among the soldiers, and most of the reservists had been mobilized from the workmen's class with whom they were now fraternizing.

Early in the game, the Ministry of the Interior ceased to exist. There was no one to give orders to the police, and after two days of bloody defense, these men gave up the struggle. They had at first placed quick-firing guns on all the public buildings, by Protopopoff's orders; and they fired from these points into the streets, without other results than to make the mob more furious, and these armed buildings targets for attack.

Though many people were circulating on foot, tramcars and conveyances were all stopped. Banks and shops were closed, and trains only arrived and left the city accidentally, now and then.

On the other hand, the ministers were too brave to fly, save only the trusted Protopopoff. They decided, each one should return to his offices, attend to what he could of routine work, protect what he could of the Imperial property intrusted to his care, and there await events. This was done; and patiently, quietly these strong men sat at their desks waiting through the hours. Pokrowsky and some of the others decided to speak with Rodzanko and Goutchoff, to obtain a guard of revolutionary soldiers for their archives. Others decided to depend on the personnel

of their own departments, for protecting government property. The arresting of the ministers was done by bands of revolutionary volunteers without authority, and no minister was arrested by official warrant, or by order of the newly created provisionals. All the tyrannical or violent acts of the week were carried through by these vague volunteer groups, who visited public buildings and private houses, and, more or less tipsy, more or less rough, made inspections and requisitions, generally stealing anything lying about, and always carrying off all arms, old or new. In my brother-in-law's home, they appropriated his war accouterment, his shooting paraphernalia, and a collection of inherited ancient and rare swords and guns, and I heard of a thousand other such cases in Petrograd. Sometimes the soldiers were well behaved, and announced they were only looking for spies and firearms, and whenever they confiscated property it was with a pretension of doing it for the public safety. In all cases, resistance was worse than useless. There were many victims, due to misunderstandings, or to hostility shown these soldiers. So it was that General Stackelberg was killed, and some few others wounded. People with German names were sorely handicapped, and certainly many were falsely accused of having commerce with the enemy.

At the Yacht Club the members living there, were Prince Engalitcheff, ex-governor general of Warsaw, with a purely Russian name; Prince Karaguéorguéovitch, brother of King Peter of Serbia, who was a general in the Russian army, decorated for personal bravery in the field, and beyond suspicion; Count Wiélopolsky of the Hussars of the Guards, aid-de-

camp of the Emperor, Polish by birth and family; and my husband, who, with his Greek name and South Russian traditions, also wearing the Imperial aiguillettes and a St. George's sword, was commander of the Cuirassiers of His Majesty, and might have seemed a safe person. Yet irrupting half-tipsy into the club apartments, ten or a dozen soldier-hooligans, after examining these gentlemen's baggage, confiscating their arms, boots, money, and other property which pleased their fancy, next examined their victims' papers and, declaring these "not in order," arrested them as German spies, and said they must go to the Duma at once.

Naturally the officers felt indignant, but they, nolens-volens, had to accept the situation. Prince Engalitcheff wished to resist, but was persuaded to be calm and cause no unnecessary irritation as the little procession started on its long and dangerous walk through the agitated city. The four men had been previously disarmed by their captors, and were obliged to remove their Imperial aiguillettes. The long two hours' walk by the Grand Morskaia, up the Nevskii, and across town to the Tauride Palace, with their lives hanging by a thread, was a fatiguing, harassing and humiliating experience. Yet, true to their traditional, Russian, childish good-nature, even these soldiers treated their prisoners illogically well, and when Prince Karaguéorguéovitch broke down because of an injured foot (which he had come from the front to treat) he was hoisted on a passing motor-truck and sent on in that way to the Duma. After the first fifteen minutes, my husband took the whole party in charge, and gave his captors orders to conduct them directly to Goutch-

koff's office at the Duma, which was done immediately on their arrival. This member of the provisional committee was amazed to see my husband and his party appear. He at once liberated them, returning their papers, and giving them certificates, to show they had already been through the ordeal, and were to be allowed now to circulate about the city or elsewhere. Then Goutchkoff drove Michael back to the club in his own motor, and the latter was none the worse for his trial, except in the loss of his sword and revolver, which had been stolen. These he had greatly valued, the sword having been worn through the Turkish war by an uncle of his, and the revolver carried by my own father through his campaigns. But the loss of these arms was nothing compared to the dangers escaped! As to the aiguillettes and the Imperial initials on my husband's epaulets, he never replaced them, since on the following morning the Emperor's abdication was announced.

To obey the Imperial will, as expressed by proclamation, meant to serve the new government faithfully, and to aid in driving the enemy from our frontier, so Cantacuzène with all other officers remained in their positions. He continued to command the Imperial Cuirassiers, whose designation was changed to "Podolsky Cuirassiers," in memory of the town from which their original quota had been drawn, away back in Russian history.

There was no move at first in the revolution, against officers or aristocrats, except in individual cases. The whole drama was made on a seemingly patriotic basis —"For the war and for national liberty," as against

the tyranny of the German or Occult party at court. It was an attack on the form of government: autocratic and bureaucratic.

After his arrest Michael had kept in constant telephonic communication with a certain deputy of the Duma, M. Boublikoff, whom we had long known as a talented young engineer, and who since his election to the lower house had become one of its most brilliant members. In the crowd at the Tauride my husband had seen him, and after cordial greetings they had held some conversation. Boublikoff had seemed cool and powerful in the midst of the excitement around him. He told my husband of the various phases they had traversed in parliament and of the terrible position in which the committee found itself, forced to act, by the danger of mob-rule, yet desiring if possible to save the throne. Later, it was through Boublikoff that my husband learned of the Emperor's stop at Pskof, and the departure of the deputation from the Duma to propose his abdication in favor of his son, who should reign as a constitutional-monarch, with a group of guardians named by the people to direct him.

Boublikoff said the men who went to meet the Sovereign felt their reception by his Majesty might be of any kind, from cold tolerance to active hostility; and that the Duma was living during their absence its worst hours; not knowing what turn events might take. If their ambassadors were arrested, or shot, by Imperial order as traitors, there would be terrible dramas enacted everywhere, and no one could control the situation. Early Thursday morning Cantacuzène asked Boublikoff, therefore, for news of the travelers, and he learned the latter had returned with the Impe-

rial proclamation safely; but the Sovereign had abdicated for both himself and his son in favor of his brother. My husband said he supposed this would be the solution of all difficulties; to which Boublikoff replied, with a remarkably prophetic vision, "No, Prince. You will see that this will forfeit all the good of the revolution. If the Czarévitch had been our Emperor to-day, the liberal and conservative forces would have rallied round his banner. Traditions dear to many Russian hearts, would have been kept, to bind all parties, while the best of democracy would have re-inforced the best of the old administration; whereas now we shall do what we can, but, lacking the strength of traditional background, and the machinery of government, as it now does, the revolution in my opinion cannot succeed in the long run."

Perhaps I misquote Boublikoff's exact words, but the sense of his opinion was the above; and it struck me deeply when my husband repeated it to me. Afterwards I often thought of him, while watching the revolution develop; and I wondered, had things been as he wished, and the young and feeble boy been our Emperor, would the new government have had more strength.

Thursday morning, after the abdicating proclamation was placarded everywhere, suddenly order seemed to emerge from the chaos. People went freely about the city; shooting ceased. It was almost uncanny to see, for underneath the surface nothing was yet established on a secure basis. There was no organization or real power; and no disciplined force could be counted on. Yet the streets and churches were crowded with smiling people, most of whom were

beribboned or cockaded with scarlet; and the town was decorated with red flags. The Imperial arms were removed from shops and palaces, and this without much show of violence or hatred. There had been comparatively little destruction of property, and little drunkenness or loss of life. Suddenly now, there was food and fuel; and the thoughtless public never realized they were living on precious reserves, but went about their business, trusting all was well with Russia, since they had what sufficed for immediate needs. On Saturday, my husband was able to leave for the front, having at last, on Friday, transacted the business for which he had gone north. He left the capital quiet and apparently safe, and our boy had returned to school.

Over the whole country the news of the revolution was received with a thankfulness almost religious; and order reigned everywhere, though the police were at once gathered in by mobilizations, and sent to the front to fight, leaving our prison doors open, and streets and highways unguarded. Unfortunately, even the frontiers were free to all for six days, so anyone might pass in without question or papers. By the time the provisional government sent soldiers to replace the ordinary frontier guardians, thousands of German spies and agents had passed our gates unmolested, and had settled down to their deadly work of organizing and forming the Bolshevik party, which in the beginning had been but a rabble. The dramatic side of this neglect was soon realized by the provisionals, but its results could never be corrected.

In the first wild days, a promise was also made that the troops then in Petrograd should never be sent to

the front, or disbanded; but should remain where they were, to protect the capital—"an honor won them, by their part in the revolutionary movement." This measure came, ready-made, from the Catherine Hall deputies, and was signed by the first government. It was afterwards much discussed, whether the ministry knew what difficulties they were putting in their own path for the near future, by placing these (already undisciplined and disloyal) troops in such an unassailable position. This act, with its far-reaching results, and the decree, which was called the "Number One Order to the Army," suppressing all law and discipline, creating "committees of soldiers" in each unit, to discuss obedience to their officers, and legally putting complete freedom into the hands of the lowest placed, were the two weights of stone which later dragged the ideals and possibilities of the revolution to the depths of the swamp in which they ended. Some officers who were at hand protested against these two edicts when they were made; but the small group of conservative men at the head were either powerless to handle the rabble, save by concessions; or else they were blinded by the dangers of a general massacre at the Duma. The "Number One Order to the Army" was printed immediately, and thousands of copies were sent by special agents directly to the soldiers all along the battle front. It was thus spread among them first, without reaching their officers. This I have been told by many who were on the firing line. Commanders were dumbfounded that a decision of such grave importance should have been taken so quickly, and sent in this way, instead of through the

usual channel of the staff, to be passed on down to army corps, divisions, brigades and regiments.

I have been told, also, by several reliable officers, who were during these days attached to the provisional government in the Tauride Palace, that they had made personal investigations at the time, and had found the presses used to print these orders were handled by Germans; also, that the messengers who had carried off the bundles of proclamations to the front were Germans, or in German pay. They had protested at once, and had asked the provisional committee to order a small posse of soldiers to arrest these enemies; but had not succeeded in obtaining permission, or men, for such service. No one in the new government *could* order the soldiers within reach to do anything; and naturally enough, no soldier would volunteer for duty connected with fighting his new-found "rights." It was much more amusing and interesting to his mind to find occupation in arresting members of the ex-government, or to visit buildings which till now he had known only from the outside. The fatality of these two edicts was not visible for some time to the general public: but the officers knew and a few others were sufficiently clear-eyed to see trouble must come from disorganizing the army and from setting the uniformed mob in the capital on a pedestal. From the first moment of the revolution, the best of the officers were very pessimistic as to the future, and saw our only salvation in military help at once from the Allies. But one and all our officers acted with loyalty to the new government, since it was provisional, and their Emperor had commanded all true sons to remain at

their posts and fight the enemy. Thanks to the superhuman work of this fine element, the army was held together for months, by the old traditions and personal influence, and by the good relations between officers and men. The former ended in accepting martyrdom, rather than be guilty of giving up the cause of our war.

As soon as the Emperor had abdicated, and the new government was formed, we heard that deputies were sent to Tzarskoe to take charge of the ex-Empress and her children, see to their safety, and to put her Majesty beyond the possibility of making a demonstration. When the Empress had realized on Monday, the movement at the capital was serious, she had sent for Rodzanko, who, besiged in the Tauride, had not been able to reply to her summons. She had counted on Ivanoff's arrival, but his train was stopped and turned back, as the Emperor's had been. The Empress then sent out various people, who were doing palace service, as messengers in different directions. None of these returned. They were either arrested, or they drifted and abandoned her cause.

Seriously alarmed finally, for the town of Tzarskoe reflected the emotions in the capital, and crowds were besieging her gates, her Majesty lived through Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, shut up with her children and attendants. Thursday morning, before he left Pskof to return to the staff, the Emperor had spoken to his wife by private wire, saying he would not join her immediately, but would return to headquarters, as he had now made all arrangements with the Duma's deputation, for remedying the situation in Petrograd. This somewhat reassured the Empress,

especially as the Sovereign neglected to tell her he had abdicated for himself and his son!

In some strange way, no news of this measure reached her Majesty till a deputation was announced to her during the day of Thursday. She immediately replied she would receive its members in audience in one of the palace halls. As she entered the room she found herself facing a group of unpretentious-looking men, whose spokesman, a young colonel, announced to her that he had the painful duty of "arresting her Majesty." She indignantly asked how and why; and was given a short history of events in the capital, of which she had been totally ignorant. Also, she learned Ivanoff had been stopped, and turned back; Protopopoff had fled; the old government was broken up, and the new ministry named and already in charge. "But his Majesty?" she inquired with impatience. And she then only was told that her husband had abdicated the night before, for himself and his heir. At this the Empress's knees gave way, and she stumbled forward, catching and bracing herself on a table. "It is not true! It is a lie! I spoke to his Majesty by private wire as he was leaving Pskof, and he said nothing of it."

The Imperial proclamation was handed her to read; and in spite of all the bitterness and despair she must have felt, she drew herself up proudly and faced the deputies, "I have nothing more to say."

They told her she might remain in her palace, and would be well cared for and her comfort seen to. "And what about the children? They are ill and cannot be disturbed." They should remain also. Then she asked two favors. That the old sailor who had

been near her son as an attendant since the boy's birth should be left to him, and that the doctor might come from outside as usual; and these were granted. Only she herself must not go out. It would not be safe, and was against the orders of those who must guard her. . . . And the ex-Empress, now a prisoner in her own palace, passed from the great hall without another word.

She did not know what would come next, what her husband was doing, or when he would return. She waited in patience, outwardly proud and calm, and told her children nothing. She saw the mob about her gates, and listening to their threatening racket, she saw the Imperial Escort of Cossacks, her guard, pass over to the revolutionary party. Even the corps of palace servants asked to leave her; all save a few who were in her personal service. Never was any one so abandoned and alone. Only one or two palace ladies remained with her Majesty, and she had no news of her husband, nor of events outside her walls.

Soon Rodzanko sent her word that if she wished to send her jewels to him, for safe-keeping, he would give a receipt, and would answer for them. She refused the offer, and kept her jewels and her children near her. Once her arrest was an accomplished fact, she was well protected from danger; but no one seemed to waste a thought on her forlorn condition, or on the anxiety she was enduring; and there are no reports or anecdotes of any sayings or doings of the ex-Empress. Sympathy was expressed on all sides in Petrograd as in Yalta by the humbler classes for her children, who were down with measles; for the Empress Mother; and for the various Grand Dukes and Grand Duchesses,

each of whom had adherents and even found protectors among their followers, friends and servants; but in the whole great empire, where they had reigned for more than twenty years, there seemed no word of praise or pity for the miserable pair who had been all-powerful Sovereigns only a few days previously, and not one person raised a hand to defend their banner. This seemed to me one of the most eloquent details of the whole revolution.

Since his arrest and liberation on the Wednesday, my husband had gone about the streets in complete freedom. He wore no side-arms, as none of the officers were doing so in town, but he put these on again on Saturday to start for the front, where he found his regiment in a state of amazement and fermentation. The great news was just then reaching the army from the capital, and the Order Number One had been already spread among the soldiers. Cantacuzène was in time to confirm true stories, and interpret the extraordinary document in such fashion that his men and officers were welded together in a common desire to prove their patriotism, and the value of their discipline. They decided, once and for all, to live up to their past traditions; and they did it through eight months of constant temptation. So remarkably did this unit stand the strain of revolutionary experiences, that they were counted unique on the whole front, were given the most difficult work, and made for themselves a reputation which was a great credit to their own and their commander's steadfastness.

Shortly after the revolution my husband was promoted to a brigade command, consisting of his own Cuirassiers, and of their sister-regiment, which in old-

régime days had been the "Cuirassiers of the Empress Mother." In leaving the head of his regiment, commanded for so many months under fire, Cantacuzène had been very sad to break up the associations. His consolation came only from the fact, that besides including it as one of the units of his brigade, the Cuirassiers' new commander — Prince Tchérkass — and all the officers still clung to him, making a personal group of adherents, almost as if they were his staff; while the soldiers, in spite of introduction of revolutionary ideals, kept their old attitude, always called Michael "our prince," and came to him with their personal and committee troubles, quite in the ancient, patriarchal manner. They even consulted him as to how they must take the new democratic theories, and how to apply them. In late July, at a meeting of the regimental "soviet," these men voted unanimously to give Cantacuzène the right to use their uniform for life, and they telegraphed staff headquarters for permission to make this exception, in doing him an honor which was a custom of the old régime, and had been abolished by the revolutionary government.

Later, the soldiers of this regiment gave many proofs of their good feeling for their officers, not the least of which was to elect a number of the latter to their committee, till the end of its existence. Relations were so exceptional, as to excite interest and comment; and through the last months of the regiment's existence I heard the Podolsky Cuirassiers cited as alone of their kind in Russia!

My husband's new command was ordered at once to Kief, there to maintain quiet in the city, where upheavals were much feared. They were also to stop

the deserters, who were coming through Kief from the front daily by hundreds. Cantacuzène deeply regretted the work he had before him. Though Kief had not been through such troubles as had Petrograd, and though it possessed a more conservative and comparatively richer lower class than the northern city, and was a most attractive place to live in, the commander of troops must face a task which was as much diplomatic as military, and which promised to be well-nigh hopeless. Of course there was no possible way of forcing deserting soldiers to return to the front, since unless they chose, they were no longer obliged to obey their superiors. Cantacuzène's own troops obeyed him from a desire to do so; but no one could say how long this might last, though they protested such confidence and devotion. In Kief, he must also get on with a group of civilian "commissioners" (and with deputations representing the new confusion of authority in Petrograd) who were one and all entirely inexperienced, and filled with the vaguest theories. My husband felt ready for anything, and he desperately determined to rest content with doing all that could be done. It became a matter of great personal pride to him that in spite of its nearness to the front, and in spite of all the political intrigues hatching there constantly during the time he was in charge — the vast Ukrainian propaganda especially — Kief remained the quietest, safest and best-behaved city in the empire. This was so till the moment when, early in November, everything was taken over by the Bolsheviki and Ukrainian powers, and the provisional government finally fell once and for all. When he was ordered to Kief, my husband wrote me of his deep-rooted dis-

like for the kind of work ahead of him; but since it was in a large and comfortable city, he said he would like me to join him, if all went well, and that he would take a house and settle down to a more stable life than he had enjoyed for two and a half years past. I was only too delighted to go; but I decided to visit the capital for some business first, and to see our boy there, as rumors were afloat about the closing of his school (the Imperial Lyceum) together with all other schools founded and protected by the ancient Sovereigns.

CHAPTER XII

AFTERMATH OF REVOLUTION

The first week following the revolution traveling had been almost impossible, and one could not reserve berths, or even seats, in any cars. All the population of Russia seemed suddenly to move about the country. Baggage was constantly being lost, and one was knocked about beyond belief. Compartments were crowded, even first class, with such ruffians, that people's clothes were dragged from them, and sleep or rest was out of the question. Car windows were smashed to admit the mob, gone wild in its orgy of democracy. Everyone was entirely good-natured, and there was no intentional ill-treatment, I heard; but I waited until some of the excitement should have subsided before undertaking my three days' trip across the country.

Two days before I started for Petrograd, I read in the local Crimean paper that my husband's old Chief, the Grand Duke Nicolas Nicolaïvitch, had arrived at his villa, Tchaïre, near us, accompanied by his wife, his brother and his sister-in-law. In attendance were only Prince and Princess Orloff, who had followed the Chief through devotion, and without salary or official position. Their old servants had also come with them, however, and all the countryside was keen to show the party care and attention. There was a very general

feeling that the Grand Duke had been ill-treated in the last years of the old régime, and that he was now being similarly treated by the new. In the first hours of the revolution he had been called to the supreme military command by a telegram from the provisional government, signed by Prince Lvoff. Upon his arrival at Moghileff headquarters he was met by a deputation from the cabinet, who with respectful excuses, and many wordy regrets, explained there had been a mistake in his being ordered to the staff; but he might, in peace and liberty, choose any of his numerous palaces or estates to settle in, or even go abroad if he preferred. The representatives of the government would accompany him to his selected home, and would see that everything was done for his comfort and convenience on the road. The Grand Duke's usual trump cards — his pride and simple dignity — saved him from the painful side of this discussion. He immediately decided to leave his official household and aids-de-camp at Moghileff, giving them their freedom, in spite of their protestations. Then he sent in his resignation to the provisional government, and with only Orloff, Doctor Malama and his servants, he joined the Grand Duchess at Kief, where she was awaiting him. From there they journeyed to the Crimea, still by a special train and with the governmental deputation in attendance. On the road south, as the train stopped at each station, vast crowds were assembled hoping to see his Imperial Highness; and they stood wildly cheering at his car windows, calling for the great national hero. It was clear that he was not one of the group against whom the revolution was aimed. When on one occasion the Chief showed himself, his apparition

in the splendid Circassian dress he wore was the signal for supreme, mad enthsiasm.

Yet he was but an exile, with a broken career, and a member of the overthrown Imperial house; only he personally stood for all that was finest, greatest and best in our old Russia; and the people recognized the grandeur and beauty of this standard-bearer, who, free to choose his future home anywhere abroad, still elected to remain a Russian among Russians, and to live on his simplest estate — the lovely Tchaïre Villa on the shores of the Black Sea.

Immediately after this arrival, came another, sadder traveler to the Crimea. The Empress Mother, with quiet dignity, settled with the Grand Duchess Xénia and the latter's husband, the Grand Duke Alexander Mihaïlovitch, at Ei-ta-dor, their home. They also had been given a choice of residence.

After so many years of kindness at these people's hands, I felt I must make some demonstration of sympathetic loyalty; so I put myself at their disposal, to carry any letters or packages to the capital; knowing this would be their only opportunity of escaping censors, who I heard now stopped all Imperial correspondence. I found the refugees were glad to avail themselves of the occasion my departure offered; and I carried away a large bagful of letters, of every shape and size, in the lining of my dressing case. I was somewhat frightened when I thought of what might happen if I chanced to be searched! Luckily I completely escaped the interest of those in power. The new régime knew nothing, and cared nothing, about my responsibilities; and I was able to deliver documents from her Majesty to her business man, and to

the Grand Master of her former Court, and to put one from her to the Dowager Queen Alexandra of England into the hands of a sure messenger in Petrograd, who carried it over the frontier. From the old Chief also, to the then Prime Minister Lvoff and to the Minister of War Goutchkoff, I carried letters; as well as a number of business letters from him concerning the direction of his private affairs. Then there were letters from all the Grand Duchesses. I was enchanted for once to repay a small part of what favors had been shown to me, through the seventeen years I had spent in Russia. Certainly I had never supposed I should be granted by fate any such chance, and it was with real joy I undertook the delicate tasks.

I had been to Tchaïre, and had heard from the Grand Duchess of the revolutionary experiences she had gone through in Tiflis, and of the call of the Chief to the staff, her anxieties for him, and his reception and disappointment at Moghileff. Also of the triumphs of their trip southward. I had seen the Grand Duke Alexander, and heard the details of the four days which the Empress Mother and he had spent at the staff with the ex-Emperor, and of the latter's arrest; also of the old Empress's return to Kief, the respectful sympathy shown her there and during her trip. All these members of the Imperial family were hopeful for the future of Russia; and they thought the provisional government would be able to push the war. They believed they would be allowed to live in peace in the Crimea, or on their country estates; but they were most anxious as to their financial situation. None had large personal fortunes, and they had depended on the pensions they drew from the Emperor's civil lists, or from

the Imperial family's estates. No single one of them, however, complained of these losses. This group had foreseen the troubles, and seemed to me less agitated now, than they had been before the cataclysm. I remarked on this to Orloff, whom I was enchanted to see again, after his long absence in the Caucasus. He replied, it seemed natural to him, and his own feeling was the same; as long as there had been hope of saving the dynasty, and keeping the Emperor on the throne, everyone was ready to sacrifice anything to that duty; but once the Sovereign had lost the game, there was nothing more to do but to accept the situation with what philosophy one could.

I told the Chief of my husband's revolutionary experiences in the capital, and of his new command at Kief; and he said he was glad my husband had remained in the service and at his post. He wished him every success, and sent him his affectionate blessings, and I am sure his approval was sincere, since his own patriotism had made him ready to accept the command of our armies, when it was offered him by the Prime Minister of the new régime. The ex-Sovereigns would go into exile, everyone supposed, but nothing was known of their future; and the Empress Mother was very anxious to hear what measures the new powers would take with reference to her son.

No member of the Imperial family in the Crimea mentioned to me personally either the ex-Emperor or his consort. Daily the newspapers published articles giving what purported to be true details of the "inner" palace and political life of Tzarskoe, during the last months of the empire; and these appeared vastly degrading and humiliating. Having some foundation,

they were naturally very generally believed, and the refugees in the Crimea knew more of the truth than did the public. They had all used their influence to fight the Occult powers, and had suffered for their protests. The Chief had been nearly two years an exile, in our Caucasian provinces, and the son-in-law of the Grand Duke Alexander and Grand Duchess Xénia, (young Prince Youssoupoff) had just now been liberated by the revolution from banishment to his country estates, where he had lived since the killing of Rasputin.

We all agreed the provisional cabinet was well chosen, and promised, on the whole, to be conservative and intelligent; and we looked forward to the probability of the "constituent assembly" being in favor of a constitutional monarchy. Some member of the Imperial family would then naturally be chosen as Emperor: possibly the ever-popular and always strong old Chief, or the Grand Duke Michael, whose wife came from the merchant class of Moscow; or perhaps Kyril, who was next in succession, and who had an Imperial wife.

There was also a chance, it seemed, of the Grand Duke Nicolas Mihaïlovitch being the people's choice. He was supremely intelligent, and had made a study of politics for years; also he had been a revolutionist in his ideas, while his democratic mode of life had given him occasion to make many friends in every group and class in the empire. He had a large personal fortune and estates, which he managed himself excellently; he had written several historical books, universally approved; he knew the "intelligencia" class of Russia; and the artistic classes knew him and his collections,



The Official War Picture of the Emperor and the Czarevitch

and were his admirers. In the Duma and the Zemstvos he had many warm friends, and in racing and sporting circles his interest in horse-breeding and his admirable shooting placed him high. He had been banished in disgrace by the ex-Empress, and had only returned to Petrograd just in time to play an evident rôle in the debates of the Duma, during the troubled revolutionary days; and he was a great favorite of the Empress Mother.

It was with intense curiosity, some anxiety, and much hope, that I went to Petrograd at the very end of March. My trip was comfortable, and quite ordinarily calm and monotonous; and my package of letters remained safely at the bottom of my *nécessaire* in spite of my sister-in-law's predictions, which had been terribly gloomy and pessimistic, as to all the things that would happen to me when I should be arrested and searched, and the package brought to light. My maid had become an ardent partisan of the revolution, from the quiet little Imperialist I had seen her through ten years, and I myself was in sympathy with what I had heard so far of the movement, and with the ideals upon which it seemed to be based.

I arrived in Petrograd, on the thirteenth of April, Good Friday, when the revolution was exactly a month old. My boy was at the station to meet me, with his grandmother's carriage. As the train came in, the platform was packed with a vast crowd of people, mostly soldiers in unbuttoned and untidy uniforms; but all of them grinning and good-natured. My baggage was seized by ready hands, and carried from the train to our vehicle. On my inquiring why soldiers did this work, my boy said the troops now ruled the

town. No one dared gainsay them, so they promenaded about, slovenly, careless, smoking, requisitioning what they liked to eat and refusing to drill or obey orders. Among other things they had taken possession of the stations, finding the work of baggage-carriers easy, amusing and profitable.

My next impression was of the Princess's coachman, with a large red bow pinned to the breast of his livery. My boy added to my amazement, by telling me that "Grandmamma was the most revolutionary of the revolutionists, and was full of enthusiasm for the destruction of all the old traditions. She rejoiced in the red flag on the Winter Palace, and especially in the closing of his school, which she considered privileged!" This, it seems, was really temporarily the case, and the Princess told me at our first meeting, how her "French republican heart beat in unison with all the new ideals." The rest of our family did not agree with my mother-in-law in this, and seemed very pessimistic. Both attitudes surprised me; for though I could not but mourn the downfall of what I had seen so brilliant and so highly placed, and of all the old poetic traditions; and though the suffering of those who were paying heavily, for the sins of a small group they had been too loyal to destroy, distressed me greatly; — it seemed to me, nevertheless, that Russia's future was full of promise, if only because all the strongest and best elements in the country, were ready with heart and soul to give their services, for carrying out ideals that should quickly lead to victory, and reorganization. On the other hand, I didn't like to see the beautiful statue of the Empress Catherine in front of the Imperial theater with a red flag pushed into her hand,

where some wag had placed it; and the revolutionary red, which floated over the Imperial palaces and the Fortress of Peter the Great, in place of the Emperor's "standard," seemed to me out of place, and very tragic. Besides, I missed the great golden eagles which had been torn down and which had represented, to my mind, more than three hundred years of picturesque history!

At the Hotel d'Europe, my usual apartment seemed cozy and homelike, and the servants, all old acquaintances of mine, had much to tell me of their personal experiences in the great days just passed. How frightened they had been when they heard the Astoria Hotel had been sacked; but now all was well. The city was quiet. Our hotel had not been threatened, and I should be as comfortable as usual, and would see how the results of one month of freedom and good government made for safety! Evidently there were varied points of view from which to contemplate the new conditions!

My poor boy was bravely facing a very difficult situation. He had not been ill-treated during the dramatic days of change, and after the Emperor's abdication he had moved freely about the streets; but his heart was bleeding for the destruction of the school he loved, with all its beautiful, distinguished traditions of more than a century's growth. A large portion of Russia's best writers, poets, statesmen and diplomats had studied within the Lyceum walls, and walked and played in its great gardens, afterwards leaving to their old school collections and manuscripts, paintings and souvenirs, of great historic value and interest; and to the boys who followed them, a great pride in the old

place. I did my best to comfort and console my young student, whose view of the whole revolution was naturally colored by the unjust treatment from which the Lyceum suffered. It was the first serious calamity in young Mike's sixteen years of life, and was an immense blow to all the loyal young fellows in quaint green uniforms who made up the corps, three hundred strong, of the Imperial Lyceum. Little by little this one's mind was converted to a patriotism large enough to include a whole country and its people, as well as a school and a traditional régime and he mourned less; but I was pleased and proud of the feeling I saw among a group, who wearing an Emperor's monogram as their school crest, had not been too easily influenced by the general enthusiasm and excitement. It seemed to me a strong trait in those boys; and I do not know whether the pupils of other Imperial institutions showed the same fine devotion. The crowds appreciated such principles, as during the disorders all the Lyceum boys went unmolested, save one, who wore upon the street a red ribbon tied to his buttonhole. He was stopped by a group of soldiers. "Take that off," said one of the latter. "Why?" asked the boy, surprised. "Because with that on, you are either a traitor or a liar," was the response. "The red ribbon does not go with the Imperial monogram you wear!" But in three hundred, only one young fellow had even thought of putting on the revolutionary color. This year, studies were to be finished by the students on May fourteenth, and the school was to be closed permanently. Our son decided to transfer to the Petrograd University. This settled, I still had nearly a fortnight to spend with him in the capital;

and I looked forward with much interest to what I should see and hear.

At first the Easter celebrations had seemed very strange, without the features of the great ceremonies at the palaces, and without the dashing court-carriages and sleighs in the streets; but the churches were packed with devout crowds, and there was a new spirit abroad of released hope, and a touching show of brotherhood. There was also marvelous order, though not a policeman was to be seen in the street. The atmosphere of the capital was really very wonderful. The public acted as if there were a solemn function going on, and on each holiday I had the impression of a cathedral atmosphere when I went out. There was food and fuel enough now, and the lower classes were smiling, content and trustful of the morrow. They showed perfect respect to those whom they had always regarded as superiors. The shops were full of supplies, and everyone was buying, since prices had been lowered by special orders of the provisional government.

The optimism of the street was not reflected, however, in the salons where I went; save apparently in the minds of the Allied ambassadors, who were convinced the war would be pushed rapidly, now that the Occult forces were overthrown. It did not occur to them that with the old régime all the machinery of administration had disappeared. They were entirely confident in the new government's power, or pretended to be.

Among my own group of friends, I found an entirely different view-point. Nearly everyone admired, and liked individually, the members of the provisional

cabinet. They wanted to help and uphold them in every possible manner, and to see them last through, till the constituent assembly; but the Russians of the upper class, when they spoke of the situation, expressed great fear of certain dangers, which loomed large to their eyes on our political horizon. First, there was an evident and grave probability of the army's complete disintegration. It was fully confessed already, that the "Order Number One" had been a terrible mistake. Also, the cry of "Land and Freedom," which the Soviets were starting, under German suggestion, raised the question of the land's immediate distribution. This made workmen and soldiers desert in vast numbers, vaguely believing what German agents told them, that they must hurry back to their homes to receive their portion of the spoils. What could the government do, to obtain this land, which was to be given away to the populace? So to our minds, the army and the land questions were both serious stumbling blocks to law and tranquillity.

Then, also, provision reserves carefully made by the old government, were being rapidly squandered now, while nothing was being done to gather new stores, and our transportation was as disorganized as ever. The police had been destroyed, and the vague civilian militia which replaced them, could be of no service in case of real necessity. Even now, they scarcely ever were in their places on the streets, which they were supposed to be patrolling.

The country was filled with spies and criminals, free to live and act as they chose. The proclamation giving Petrograd's garrison the right to remain in the capital, and the lack of discipline among these troops,

made us realize that in case of further uprisings, one could not expect them to act in the public service. Yet they had the arms and ammunition of the capital in their hands! At present the populace was behaving well, in the belief of a speedy millennium; and Kerensky's elemental eloquence, together with national gentleness and ancient habits of good behavior, still gave an excellent outside appearance to the town's citizen soldiers and its general public.

The factories were not working. The workmen all were members of committees, and they were busy "governing"; or were merely doing nothing, and finding life too agreeable to return to their duties. The "soviets of workmen and soldiers," still in residence at the Tauride Palace, composed the real government within the government, and were becoming a force with which the ministry was obliged to reckon. They even made some proclamations independently, and insisted that the cabinet must have their consent to all its measures; otherwise they "would not be representing popular opinion." Kerensky still held his party's confidence, and he handled them with genius; but it was difficult for him to accord the ideas of the workmen and soldiers with those of his ministerial colleagues; and his health was breaking rapidly under the strain of his speeches and travels.

The government was puzzled and distressed, beset with unanswerable problems; and it turned this way and that, trying by concessions and diplomacy to carry the country over the dangerous interval of provisional power. It had a terrible responsibility, and the members of the cabinet put all their patriotism into a policy which was doomed to failure in time. Some kept

hopes of the future, especially if the constituent assembly could be brought about soon, and a permanent form given the government. We wanted at least to save the war and our national prestige; even if our own fortunes and personal property must be lost.

Meanwhile, German agents were everywhere, fomenting trouble, disorganization and discontent. All the exiled and imprisoned revolutionists were arriving from abroad, and from Siberia, bringing the addition of their theories and Utopian ideals to the general salad of complications.

Yet there was much to be admired, as I looked at the city about me in these first days. The ex-Sovereigns lived with quiet and comfort in their Tzarskoe Palace, guarded, but unmolested; all but a few of the old-régime ministers had been entirely liberated; and in the main the prisoners retained in the fortress really deserved to be there. Woyeikoff and Mme. Wiroboff had been added to Soukhomlinoff, Schéglovitoff, Protopopoff and Stürmer. There were a few who certainly were confined by mistake, martyrs to others' crimes; but Pokrowsky, Krivaschène, Bark and many others of the ex-government were leading their ordinary free existences, and seemed glad to be out of their earlier great positions. The Imperial suite and the court officials were not disturbed in any manner.

I saw my friends informally, and constantly, as usual; keeping a salon full daily about my tea-table. If anything, they were all better-humored than in the winter, and much less preoccupied, having no responsibilities now. I went frequently to all the houses where I had been a habituée, even to see the families of some of the men now in the fortress, whom I felt disinclined

to neglect, in the moment of their disgrace, and I visited them quite openly.

The first of May —Labor-Day — passed with great processions and with meetings in the street. Disorders were expected, but everything went off quietly, and from this fact people drew confidence. All the forenoon processions of government employees, soldiers, sailors, poor factory workers of both sexes, and school children, wandered about the main streets, with red banners on which were written various mottoes, such as "Land and Freedom," "Liberty." They chanted religious songs, or their bands played the Marseillaise, which had replaced our own national anthem; and, though I had been warned of possible dangers, twice I walked out to see the sights. The religious progresses were immense, and those who took part wore exalted, soft faces, while their voices were sweet and low, as those of our people always are. The general public were entirely sympathetic, and their behavior respectful and full of dignity. There was not a policeman in town, yet no single disorderly incident marred the celebrations anywhere. To see the people in this phase, was to love them; and I was infinitely touched by the beauty of the Russian's nature, and its simple nobility!

There were comic suggestions now and then in the catchwords of the period. All the stock phrases of speeches, mottoes, inscriptions — of accusations, also — contained invariably the expressions "we must uphold the revolution," or "they are attacking the revolution," or "we must protect the revolution." It would seem to any one outside that the revolution was a personage attacked, reviled or ill-treated, and with

too little power and strength to stand alone, by its own merits and popularity. These phrases to me contained a grotesque element, and carried the revolution farther and farther away from the sublime claim of universal popularity, on which it had at first been created, till finally with Trotsky and Lenine "protecting the revolution" and "upholding it," the poor thing reached the depths of shame!

Albert Thomas, the great French Socialist, was visiting Petrograd, and being an old acquaintance of mine, he came to me several times for a cup of tea and a chat. I was greatly interested in hearing him talk of our present situation, which he admitted caused him many surprises. First of all, he said he had been told that he was to come out to converse with men of his party — that is, Socialists. "But your definitions are different from ours in France; and when I found myself facing the representatives of my supposed opinions here, I discovered these were not Socialists at all, but what we call in France: Anarchists and Communards." He was cheerful and optimistic, however, and he insisted the future of our country would be better than the present. He counted upon our being able to reorganize rapidly for a supreme war-effort during the summer. He told me one day that there was a very strained situation between Kerensky and Miliukoff in the cabinet —"with which I have nothing to do, except that it makes my work more difficult, since as I am sent by the French Government to yours, I am directed to act with and through Miliukoff, your Minister of Foreign Affairs; and on the other hand, I am charged with a mission from my party in France to their comrades in opinion here (Kerensky at their

head); therefore, with a misunderstanding between Miliukoff and Kerensky I am obliged to wait with crossed arms, till the questions are settled between them, before I can accomplish anything." He said he had come to replace Paléologue temporarily, as the latter had been too closely identified with Czardom, to be of much use in the present current of Russian ideas. I was very pleased with Albert Thomas. All his theories and hopes for Russia interested me deeply; but I did not see him again after the spring. He remained in our country till late summer, and traveled and studied us in our various phases. Before he departed for France, I heard his opinions were greatly changed; and even that he had declared, he had always thought ill of our Emperor before, for abusing and suppressing the Russians; but now he admired him for having managed to reign over them peaceably, during twenty odd years.

As a contrast to Thomas, I saw several times the Grand Duchess Victoria, wife of Kyril Vladimirovitch, who next after the Emperor's brother, was in line of succession to the throne. I was very sorry for her, as I had known her ever since her arrival in Russia, and had had many occasions to admire her fine qualities, besides finding her a most sympathetic person. People were saying the Grand Duke Kyril, in joining the revolutionary movement at the very beginning, hoped the Imperial crown would fall upon his head, he and his wife having always been very simple and democratic in their lives, and always in opposition to the Occult forces of the old régime. It was with good reason they had held their positions so well in Petrograd circles for they were a charming and dis-

tinguished pair. Victoria was born a princess of the English royal house, her father being the second son of Queen Victoria (styled Duke of Edinburgh and Coburg). He had married the Grand Duchess Marie Alexandrovna of Russia, sister of Alexander III and of Vladimir, Kyril's own father. Victoria had first married, in her teens, the Grand Duke of Hesse, brother of our Empress, and this husband was her own first cousin on her father's side, since the mother of Hesse and of our Empress, was Princess Alice of England. For seven years the Grand Duchess Victoria had been a miserable wife, but had finally obtained a divorce from her German husband, to marry Kyril. Her difficulties during her first marriage had embittered our Empress against her, and her being openly in love with Kyril was well known to all the courts in Europe, and had caused much talk. When a divorce was finally granted her, the Emperor of Russia sent for Kyril, his cousin, and forbade him to marry Victoria, who was now free. Kyril replied that he had come to this audience with the express intention of announcing his engagement, and of asking the Sovereign's permission, as head of the house, for his marriage; whereupon the Emperor refused it. Then Kyril, defying his master, joined the Grand Duchess Victoria abroad, and married her anyhow.

Nicolas II, acting at the request of the Empress, issued an edict immediately, saying Kyril was deprived of his court rank, and his service, and was banished from the empire, since her Majesty did not wish to receive the divorced wife of her brother. All this noise seemed not in the least to affect the happiness of the new ménage. Rich in their own right, both of them,

they did not miss their allowances suppressed from the Imperial civil lists; and they spent three or four years on the Riviera, in Paris, or in the country in Bavaria, where one or the other of them owned homes. In all these surroundings, they made a most charming circle about them, held a gay court, and were greatly admired for their beauty, wit and charm, and their unfeigned happiness. The young Grand Duchess was grieved, however, that her marriage to Kyril had caused his exile, and his giving up his service in the Imperial navy; and through her mother and his, she brought such pressure to bear on our Emperor, that finally one summer Kyril was allowed to bring his wife to Tzarskoe on a visit; and after six months or a year more they were officially forgiven, and were permitted to return and live in Russia, where Kyril again took up his service, received back his rank and aiguillettes, while Victoria became at once one of the powers at court, and the leader of the younger group in society.

My husband had been the intimate boyhood friend of the Grand Duke Kyril, and they had first played, then studied, and later traveled together before our marriage. Since I had married, Kyril had been a constant frequenter of our house, and naturally we were enthusiastic over his return to favor; and we found his wife delightful.

When the war came, all the war work organized by the Grand Duchess Victoria was immensely successful, and I had admired her as much in times of trouble, as in the gay circle of old days. Now I wanted especially to show I was most sincerely of her followers. . . . I did not know whether Kyril had been forced by his marines of the Imperial Guards to accompany them to

the Duma on that first day of the revolution, or if he had gone there of his own free will, but I did know of the effort he had made during the previous autumn, in risking his trip to the staff, to plead with the Sovereign against the Rasputin-Wiroboff crowd, when so many unkept promises of liberal reform were made to him. For that act I held him in high esteem.

I called up the Grand Duchess on the telephone, and she answered in person and invited me as of old to come to her. I found her in informal dress, and with her tea-table spread, in her small sitting room; there was the usual beauty and comfort in all the arrangements of her palace, which kept more an air of home than any other in the city. With its books and knitting, soft chairs and lights, and all its treasures in marbles and collections so disposed as to be merely harmonious parts of the general scheme of decoration it was wonderfully attractive. She herself looked older, seemed grown taller, and was all in black. As we smoked and drank tea, and talked, I heard with joy her calm, fair judgment of people and things; and I was won by the uncomplaining way she had of accepting a situation which upset her life so thoroughly. She asked news of those of the Imperial family, whom I had recently seen in the Crimea, and she spoke of our experiences; then she told me some of her own. She said she had heard from every side of the apparent incapacity of the Emperor to react against circumstances, previous to the revolution. Also, of his inertness at the last; and she told me even the Empress Mother had said after her last days with her son at the staff, "It is as if someone had exchanged my son for another man, quite unlike him; so indifferent he

was, and so silent, through all the great events. He did not at all realize what had happened to him."

I inferred the Grand Duchess was thinking of the current report that the Occult clan at court had drugged the Emperor into complete inertia; though she did not actually say this. Of herself and her husband, and their plans for the future she told me the provisional government begged them to keep as quiet as possible. They were consequently going into Finland for the summer; where they would not be too far away from the capital; yet where they could get country life and quiet, for themselves and their children. She was very simple, and uncritical of the old régime, as well as of the new; but she seemed on the whole full of hope for the future of the country. She had long known Rodzanko and others of his group, and believed in them and their intentions; but thought they would be treading on difficult ground before long.

On the third of May, I lunched with Prince and Princess Kotschoubey (my husband's aunt and uncle) and from their small party, all of whom were the cream of the old régime, I heard also only broad-minded political opinions expressed. The party seemed unusually optimistic; and they prophesied that Russia soon would be a flourishing republic.

The Grand Duke Nicolas Mihaïlovitch was there, and he drove me home to my hotel, leaving me with a promise to return again for tea later that afternoon when he had been to his club for war news. We had spoken together in crossing the city of the perfect order in the streets, and of the fine behavior of the public, though there was no sign of authorities about to keep order. The Grand Duke had been most en-

thusiastic over the masses, who were showing such a capacity for restraining themselves, even after years of repression, from which a reaction was to be expected. "I should be neither surprised nor afraid to see them form a republic soon," said his Imperial Highness. "And would you consent to be their president, Monseigneur?" I asked. "Well, not the first one. . . . Their second president, perhaps? . . . It would be easier." And the Grand Duke laughed. Later, when he returned to tea, he told me he had come down the Nevskii ahead of a great demonstration — a procession of soldiers, and plenty of rabble about them, with black banners of anarchists, and shots, and shouting against the government, while on one banner in large letters was written, "Down with capitalists and conservatives!" As one never knew what might happen, he advised me to remain at home for the rest of that evening. Several other people who dropped in between the tea and dinner hours, brought the same reports of agitation, and the same advice; and added that in their opinion, as the government could not control nor order the troops, it had better give in immediately, without subjecting the city to a renewed experience like that of a month before. Everyone was evidently extremely nervous as to what might occur, and the officers said of course that one could expect nothing good to come of mob rule and encouragement of lack of discipline. They were most of them pessimistic but quite unafraid, and they thought there was still time to act energetically.

For two days the town was up in the air, sharp fighting and shooting going on in most of the main streets, especially the Nevskii. The shops were partly

barricaded, yet between the fights people went about and attended to business. It was my "baptism of fire," as I had not been through the previous demonstrations, in March. My boy had now finished with his school, as his year's marks were good enough for him to receive his diploma without examinations, and we had taken our accommodations to leave the capital for Kief in the evening of the fifth of May. Our train was scheduled for six-thirty o'clock. The streets were still turbulent, and the confusion at the railroad station very great; my boy took the maid, trunks and tickets to the depot about three o'clock that afternoon to insure our baggage being put on the train in time. Towards four a number of people dropped in for good-bys and to bring me sweets and flowers, in kindly Russian manner. I ordered tea, of course, and while we sat chatting, suddenly our attention was attracted by the sound of quick-firing guns and salvos of infantry quite near. One of the hotel servants rushed in, pale with excitement, to say I was to close my windows at once, as there was a battle going on in front of the hotel; and that though my rooms were more protected than most, by their outlook on the quiet square and the Imperial museum opposite, the hotel director begged me to avoid showing myself at the windows. The windows were already closed, so we went on with our tea, and began to discuss how I should manage to reach the station. Everyone was entirely philosophical, as we gradually were being trained to these small inconveniences. M. Bark said his carriage was below at my disposal, and that he would take me round through backways, parallel with the Nevskii, to a point beyond the struggle, where we might in safety cross that thor-

oughfare, and still by side streets go on towards the station. This seemed practical, as he was not in uniform, and would not attract attention. Then, after half an hour, as the acute firing subsided, General Knorring volunteered to go down and see what was occurring in front of the hotel. He returned, saying the crowd was enormous on the Nevskii, but there was a lull in the fighting and the wounded were being cleared away. In his opinion I had better leave now, and profit by the moment's calm to cross the Nevskii, instead of waiting till later, when I did not know what might happen. My various guests departed on my consenting to this plan, and I hurriedly put on hat and coat, and with M. Bark and General Knorring I descended to the hotel office, and went out into the street. There was no shooting, so we decided to cross the wide street at once, and on foot. We were quite ten minutes doing it, not wishing to seem in haste with a crowd so large, almost stationary, and containing elements of variable and possibly hostile temper. M. Bark's horses had taken fright from the noise, it turned out, and his coachman had driven them home, leaving a message for his master, but we didn't regret this, as liveries would have attracted attention, and perhaps created a disagreeable incident. My two cavaliers conducted me safely over the battlefield of a few moments before, then the general left me under the Bazar Arcades with my un-uniformed campanion to protect me, and he wandered off to search for a cab. This was found shortly, and General Knorring returned in triumph with his cabby, who proposed he should be paid ten rubles to the station, instead of the

usual two. "As one is apt to run into any kind of danger on the way, Excellencies!"

Naturally we were very glad to accept these terms and his services; and I arrived safely at the Kief depot, an hour and a half ahead of my train time, to find my boy standing on the pavement in front of its entrance, with a pale, anxious face, which lighted up at sight of us. He said he was just starting after me, as someone had come there, telling of fighting on the Nevskii and round our hotel, and he didn't know how I ever would get out. But all had gone well, and we and our baggage were finally beyond a danger, which our ears told us had recommenced again. We heard the regular firing of the infantry's salvos back of us, in the main part of the city, as I made my adieu to my kind bodyguard, and with gratitude we left the stormy capital.

Our train went unmolested to Kief, and we had no disagreeable experience on the way, though the corridor of our car was crowded with soldiers, who talked politics violently through the thirty-six hours the trip lasted, and who expounded to us the most muddled and impossible theories of government, which they were going to introduce into practice. They were entirely respectful and well behaved toward us personally, and did not carry out their ideas of democracy so far as to intrude into our compartment; but I felt after the helplessness the government had shown in the uprising of the past three days, that we should be living on a volcano for many months to come. It would be well to place our children somewhere in safety, before I undertook to settle down with my husband in Kief, so I decided to propose to the latter sending the three

little people for whose welfare we were responsible to my mother. This arrangement would give me time and independence to settle in Kief, and follow the developments of the revolution. We could attend to any duties that imposed themselves on us, with reference to Michael's service or the estates, with a knowledge that our children's lives were entirely sheltered from storms. If anything happened to us, which seemed quite possible, considering Cantacuzène's marked situation in Kief, the children would be with their natural guardians in America.

I found my husband had made the same reflections as I had, and he at once fell into my plan with enthusiasm. We secured the first accommodations possible out of Russia by the trans-Siberian road. But these were only to be had for the early part of July, so I planned to visit now for a month in Kief, then go to the Crimean coast for another month with the children, and from there take the little group to Petrograd, and start them on their long trip.

These arrangements once made, I felt a weight already off my mind. I enjoyed the time in Kief, and was keenly interested in all I was told and shown there. My husband had been very anxious during the latter part of our stay in Petrograd, thinking the disorders might end in mob-rule and our lives be in real jeopardy. On the day after I reached Kief, however, the papers announced that all difficulties between parties had been settled satisfactorily in the capital by the complete triumph of Kerensky and his followers. The government had seen the necessity of giving way to the socialistic tendencies, and Miliukoff had thereupon first protested, and then resigned. He was replaced at the

Foreign Office by Téréschtchenko; and Schingaroff had gone into the latter's Ministry (of Finance).

Our group regretted the departure of Miliukoff, as it meant one strong honest patriot the less in the cabinet; but since it was all a temporary affair, people were encouraged to think it did not matter much. The important thing seemed to be to preserve law and order, and to continue the war, until the great elections came off, towards autumn. The more the Socialists were brought forward now, the more they would be obliged either to make good, which would be the better for Russia, or to damn themselves in public opinion, and so lose their chance of finally holding power.

Almost everyone concurred in this opinion, and Kerensky personally still kept the general admiration. He, an ardent revolutionist always, had shown tremendous patriotism, moderation and lack of personal vanity in the crisis; and he had, since his placing in the Ministry of Justice, handled questions connected with the detention of the ex-Sovereigns and members of the old-régime party, with more generosity and dignity, than any one could have hoped for. He also showed himself a consummate leader of his own party, and managed its unruly elements with a skill altogether remarkable. His eloquence continued to excite the multitude's admiration, and even the most retrograde gave him their respect. I found in Kief, as in Petrograd, that everyone considered Kerensky was going to be the greatest man of the time, and all groups joined in wishing him success.

CHAPTER XIII

KIEF

My husband was established in Kief with his Cuirassiers about him. They were the great attraction in the public squares and parks, and were shining lights in a town which was apparently full of holiday makers. It was overrun also with deserters and careless soldiers, who could dress now as they pleased, and salute their officers or not on the streets. These roughs smoked everywhere, and I fancied from their aspect they never shaved or washed. Against this background the spick-and-span, well-groomed, picked men of our Cuirassiers contrasted strongly. Their pride was in their looks and discipline; and they thoroughly enjoyed their successes. It was their ambition to set an example, which alas was not followed by those who surrounded them. My husband was delighted with the way his officers and men had taken the revolution; and he almost hoped he might be able to hold his command together, and really keep the city in order, till the occurrence of the constituent assembly. This was to be arranged for in September, the government's proclamations promised.

Kief's attitude was much more optimistic than had been Petrograd's. Hotels and restaurants were crowded; there were musicals, plays and festivities, with enormous numbers of arrivals and new settlers. All the Polish aristocrats, who were refugees from the war-devastated provinces, had already settled here in

1915; and among them were many pretty women in attractive homes, wanting to forget the sufferings they had been through. They held courts where our society of Petrograd was represented by its members who had estates in the provinces round us: in Kief, Poltava, and Volhynia. Since the disorders in Petrograd these were attracted still more by Kief, and they were renting houses or lodgings, according to what was offered. They were seemingly confident that Çantacuzène would maintain order, and that life would be calmer consequently than elsewhere. Also, that their estates, where the land reforms and general conditions in the past made for a well-to-do and conservative peasantry, would probably escape disaster. They believed personally they could hold their own people and weather the storm of the revolution here better than elsewhere.

On our estates in Poltava, the prices of labor had been pushed up somewhat, but otherwise things were going smoothly. Our "peasant committee" had acclaimed my brother-in-law when he had recently been to Bouromka. Our intendant, who was of the peasantry, was on excellent terms with the villagers, but it was decided that my mother-in-law should not go to the country for this summer, as she was in a bad condition of nerves. Though the place remained vacant, many others round about us were occupied by their owners, who were satisfied all was going well locally, and would go even better later, since confidence existed between proprietors and peasants.

There was in Kief a large and varied element of officers — those who were passing through on military duty, those who were stationed about the town to keep

order on the railroads, besides all those who were taking short leaves, and who could more easily run from the front into this gay little city, than go farther into the interior of the country. There was a demonstration in May, a feeble effort of the Bolshevik propagandists, who had come from Petrograd; but it amounted to nothing, and it had been necessary only to put a few mounted Cuirassier patrols in the streets to have the meetings disperse without trouble while our troops were acclaimed. The latter showed an alertness about obeying orders which inspired the public of every class with appreciative admiration. This delighted Cantacuzène.

Shortly there began to be talk of a Ukrainian movement, "intended to bind together the groups of Little Russia, as against the disorderly ultra-socialistic waves that may come into our provinces from the north!" We knew there were German agents working among us for the Bolsheviki; and both the upper and lower classes of people wished to keep these out of Kief and the surrounding country. Many aristocrats, both Russians and Poles, were curious as to the Ukrainian doctrines, which had apparently sprung from nowhere overnight, and the source of which could not be traced at first. My husband became interested in finding out the origin and aims of this mysterious propaganda, for in two or three weeks, after a casual first mention, the word "Ukrainian" was in everyone's mouth. To his great annoyance, he and some of the civil authorities who were working on the same lines, being suspicious of the movement, discovered a nest of Austrian agents with Austrian money, at the bottom of a clever plot to unite the ancient provinces that had first formed

the Ukraine, and thus by creating a "nationalist" movement — seemingly inaugurated against the Bolsheviki — to separate these provinces from the Russian central government. Playing on the community of interests between these Russian-Ukrainians and those of the Austrian-Polish-Ukrainians, their scheme was, later to bring this whole section of the Russian Empire under Austrian influence; or simply, if all went well, to annex it to Austria. It was a deep-laid and intelligent plot of the enemies, whose agents in Kief were either Austrian spies, or Poles and Russians, their dupes and paid agents. Reports of this were at once sent to the central government in Petrograd, accompanied by proofs; and orders came back to my husband and others that the Ukrainian propaganda was to be fought to a finish. Consequently some of the leading men of that party were pursued and run out of the town, and a counter-propaganda was inaugurated. The nationalist movement was being given a black eye, though there was a group still among Little Russian peasants, Poles and the deserting soldiers, who liked the new ideals — or the enemy's money — and who said they wished to see an autonomy under Russian sovereignty, but with Ukrainian newspapers, banks, money and army. A committee was formed to represent the interests of this party. They gave the authorities some difficulty and anxiety, since in spite of the severe instructions from the provisional government, a "committee" could not be suppressed, with the then ideas of freedom; neither could spies be executed, as capital punishment was no longer permissible. Consequently, agents of the Austrians had little to fear and stayed among us on every side.

Early in July the Ukrainians sent deputies to Kerensky begging him to do justice to their party, saying that all reports notwithstanding, their desire was to keep law and order, and to remain under the wing of Russia. They wished an autonomous government, to use their own language, to stamp their own coins and to form their own regiments, but the latter would be glad to fight side by side with their Russian comrades. These men talked so well in Petrograd that Téréschtchenko was sent to Kief to confer with leaders of both sides in the struggle. The Minister of Foreign Affairs had been chosen by Kerensky for this delicate mission, because he was a native of Kief, had large interests in the industrial life of the southern city, and would probably, therefore, be a just and capable arbiter. On the other hand, among the Ukrainians there was great rejoicing over this choice of the government's representative. Capital was made of his being the Foreign Minister, which meant to them treatment as an independent power, with whom diplomatic relations were inaugurated! When Téréschtchenko arrived, he was at once taken in hand by the Ukrainians, who fêted and surrounded him, and prevented the group representing his own party, from counter-balancing their treatment and argument. He was persuaded to feel that he personally, in his sugar-factory interests, and all other industrial and property owners in and around Kief, stood to gain by a Ukrainian régime, since the latter would be conservative and a bulwark against the Bolsheviki; also that the lower classes (peasants and soldiers) would have their patriotism awakened by a nationalist propaganda, and would behave better, and make themselves more useful

under the "rada's" direction. As to the idea of an Austrian foundation for their party, it was pure calumny, and was proved by the Ukrainian troops' wish to fight together with the Russians against Teutonic enemies. They talked on, and their manoeuvers were so successful that before Téréschtchenko left Kief, he saw everything through spectacles put upon his nose by the plotters; and he had admitted their perfect right to form a government, with a senate (which they called "rada"), also a ministry with different departments to handle local questions. They were to make up a given number of volunteer military units, these regiments to be formed by soldiers drawn away from Russian formations, through open and permitted propaganda. Such troops were to be officered by Ukrainian nationalists, though they would obey orders from the Russian War Ministry sent to them by way of their own minister for war.

Téréschtchenko was seemingly quite sincere in his belief that such decisions were for the best from every point of view. Apparently, he never realized that his act was giving the lie to his own central government's former policy, and that he was putting a military force in the field, which might some day fight the provisional government and overthrow it. My husband and others saw this reverse side of the shield; and pointed it out, first to the minister himself, afterwards to the central government; but they received reply that their business must be to watch the development of all the different branches of the movement, see that it did not get beyond bounds, and that the Ukrainians really carried out their promise of sending troops to the front.

Kief was full of Ukrainian deserters, soldiers en-

joying themselves vastly, with never a thought of drill or military duty. As fast as one group could be started off in trains, double the number would arrive again, by rail or on foot. They attracted everyone's attention, and increased vastly my husband's uneasiness. It became more and more evident that neither the deserters nor the Ukrainian propaganda could be disposed of without some radical measure taken by Kerensky from Petrograd, and he was too weak to dare risk offending such a party. On the surface all was still and smooth in the life of Kief, but cankers were beneath the seeming quiet and comfort of our days, and filled thoughtful people with forebodings for the near future.

Kerensky had tried his eloquence to make the national army take the offensive in July on the Galician front, and the disaster of Tarnopol had been the result. Officers alone had charged the enemy, while the soldiers stood still, saw them shot down, and turning fled. Finally the battle became a complete rout. Columns of our own army overran the country in their frantic desire to break away; and they burned villages and homes, pillaged châteaux, put some of the staff commanders to the sword, acting towards their own people with a wild, fierce cruelty.

Kerensky had thus proved in person and definitely, that his theory of how to handle troops was worthless. He evidently understood this, as he never again approached a battle front anywhere, and limited his military administration to proclamations and declarations of a very violent order, which were quite ineffective, since they were never followed up by action. As for the troops, thereafter they were left to their officers'

hands, and the latter, having no right to punish them, were instructed to get on with the soldiers "by diplomatic arguing and explaining." Kerensky seemed still to hope from the Northern front some sort of recompense for the drama at Tarnopol. He offered this theory through his cabinet to the foreign diplomats in Petrograd. The ambassadors of the Allies actually were told that the great number of deserters they saw were not deserters at all, but represented a spontaneous, permitted demobilization of certain classes of older men, who were being allowed to return home to cultivate the land; after which, the remaining army-units would be strengthened by new recruits, also renewed discipline, and would at the end of the summer be ready to take the offensive all along the line with vigor! The American Ambassador told me this, and said, when I protested, that "it must be true, as the Minister of War had told him of it, and he was of course a reliable authority!"

Since the officers felt sure of defeat, they begged that no offensive be tried; that the Russian army be left, a mere curtain, to hold certain of the enemy's troops in front of them. They could perhaps take the offensive, if the Germans withdrew their formations, and they hoped this would permit, in time, some sort of morale being restored. The worthless men having deserted, they counted on their personal influence with the remaining better elements to bring order, sufficient for this much work, out of the reigning chaos. It was the extreme limit of good to be expected under actual conditions, and the officers claimed it would serve the Allied cause better than would another tragic failure and defeat. Meantime some shock battalions of

picked men — mainly officers or young boy cadets from the military schools, all volunteers — were being formed. One of women, under Mme. Batchkarova, was called the "Battalion of Death," and showed up magnificently through all the troubles that were to come.

In Kief, the Cuirassiers still held everyone's confidence and admiration. Many of the men in the regiment were born in Little Russia, but they disdained the insidious nationalist persuasions of the Ukrainians, and would not join the new movement. On the contrary, they had a sharp encounter with a Ukrainian regiment which, having been formed and armed, though not drilled, was ordered to the front to fight, and refused to go. Its companies were loaded on their trains and started off, eight hundred and fifty of them, by forty-five stalwart Cuirassiers. A number of Ukrainian "patriots" were ill-treated in the process, and the event caused tremendous noise. The nationalists were greatly ridiculed, first, for not keeping their promise to go and fight more willingly; and secondly, for being such poor soldiers that eight hundred and fifty of them were no match for forty-five real troopers! Finally, their complaints were carried to Petrograd, with the result that permission was granted the Ukrainians to remain in Kief doing police duty there, as the Petrograd garrison did in the northern capital. Their excuse for asking this favor was that they were not as yet sufficiently prepared, though individually most of them had been at the front during three years of war. Naturally enough, they never did drill or prepare further, but simply stood about, making a large unruly element in our town. They made such a sorry

appearance before the public, however, that the Cuirassiers and the population of Kief disdained them for the moment, and they lost ground more than one would have supposed possible. For several months they laid their arrogance aside, but attacked in various underhand ways representatives of the central government, biding their time for an uprising and augmenting their recruits constantly.

From late July on, whenever he went into the street, my husband was followed by various strange-looking individuals, sometimes in hooligan's shabby dress, sometimes in uniform. I was on the qui vive, and these apparitions dogging Michael about made me somewhat anxious. He personally treated the whole matter as a joke, and amused himself frequently leading the mysterious spies on wild-goose chases about the city, or stopping unexpectedly with a loud remark about them and their interest in his affairs. He was greatly touched and pleased, on the other hand, to hear of various proofs of devotion his Cuirassiers gave him. Upon one occasion, when in a tram-car two of his stalwarts overheard someone, who with evil intent was making allusions to their commander, naming him, and slurring his political sincerity of intention, without more ado, the two Cuirassiers turned in to clear up the situation. Incidentally they cleared the car of a whole group of offenders, amid the applause of the other passengers. In the streets Cantacuzène was now a well-known figure. He was constantly being saluted, pointed out, or spoken to in a friendly, grateful spirit.

At the Crimean seaside I spent a delightful month, waiting quietly with the children for the date of their

departure to America. I had many friends about me, and greatly enjoyed my "cure," in spite of anxieties, which the long trip before my little people caused me. We were all so used to disorder by now, that the vague sense of danger, which we had even in the south, was not really disturbing.

It was during my stay in the Crimea that Admiral Koltchak, who till now had kept the most perfect order and discipline at Sebastopol, was obliged to resign by an uprising of the sailors of the Black Sea fleet which he commanded. He was replaced by an officer of the sailors' election, and from that moment excesses were feared all along the coast; especially where the members of the Imperial family and their suites were scattered. The Imperial exiles were under arrest now, and we heard of motor-loads of half-drunken Bolshevik sailors scouring the country, robbing and assassinating the well-to-do people who had taken refuge anywhere on the peninsula. None of the ruffians came to our prosperous resort, however; and except that life grew very expensive, and there was some slight absence of table luxuries, I remember our experience only as pleasant and restful, and a very satisfactory preparation for what was to follow. However, we were glad to turn our faces northward, since a strike on all the railroads was threatened, and this announcement made me impatient to see my young travelers beyond our borders. Letters from Petrograd seemed to reflect very uncertain conditions. Senator Root's mission had come and gone, and he had written to me twice, giving me news of my family, from whom he had brought me many messages. Besides this personal information, his letters reflected what seemed a rather



The Imperial Family about 1912

determined optimism as to the Russian situation, and a desire to believe the best of our capacity to live through the revolutionary period. Knowing the reliability of his judgment, I was very keen to have him receive a variety of accounts and impressions and not alone the official history of events, which I felt must be that necessarily presented by men he would meet in the capital. His limited stay and the surrounding influences would keep him away altogether from certain questions, while the government would naturally try to inspire him with confidence in its ability to take an active part in the war. Unless someone of the military or of the old régime group was near to predict the sadder possibilities in our revolutionary movement, I feared a false version of our recent experiences would alone be told. I heard afterward that the Senator had seen Sazonoff, and that one or two others also had presented our view; but he left just before the Tarnopol offensive, and I fear with greater hopes for Russia than the country was able to justify.

CHAPTER XIV

KERENSKY AND BOLSHEVIKI

I reached Petrograd on July fourteenth, a Saturday, and settled down at once in my old apartments at the Hotel d'Europe to the complicated measures necessary for supplying my company of travelers with passports, money, and so on, for beyond the frontier. We had been forewarned by everyone of the great difficulties we should encounter on the trip from the Crimea to the capital; but we had suffered no inconvenience at all, save from heat, and from the crowds everywhere, which made it impossible to move about at any of the stations. We had supplied ourselves with provisions, and were therefore able to eat and live in our reserved compartments. There we were quite unmolested by what seemed to be the millions of deserters, swarming like flies on the roofs, in the corridors, on the platforms — everywhere. They were noisy, but perfectly good-natured, and entirely willing to fetch and carry for us, and make themselves useful. With these three days successfully behind us, and with the supreme triumph of finding all our baggage still on our train, and intact, my optimism grew as to the children's long trip through Siberia. I was glad enough, however, to see their time for starting nearly at hand; for I had noticed both on the railroad and in the capital a queer general effervescence, which

was vastly increased in the past six weeks and it could scarcely be expected an improvement would occur with time.

The day of our arrival in Petrograd I met several acquaintances, and it struck me that those who were best placed to observe events were looking most serious. My own business could all be easily arranged, and was immediately put in hand. On Monday I must present myself with petitions for each passport, photographs of each member of the party, also with all the travelers in person and with two sponsors for my veracity, who must viva-voce assert the destination, and all possible details as to the proposed trip. The engagement was made for this serious conference. Two old friends of ours promised to answer for us in required form, and my man of business was to go ahead and pave our way with money. Everything came off perfectly. After a quiet Sunday, during which we had driven about the city, lunched out pleasantly, and I had seen a number of people, who returned from old habit to my tea-table, we met promptly at two o'clock, on Monday, at the passport division of police city headquarters. Our large party, which consisted of three children, nurse, governess, a business man and myself, together with General Zolotnitzky and M. Tatischtcheff, attracted immediate and amiable attention from the old régime officials, who were still in charge and who had been prepared to receive us. The business was put through with much effort on all sides in record time,— about an hour and a half. In spite of the prepared written petitions, many questions still had to be answered, explanations made, and everyone had to sign six times or more. Then we were told

the passports would go that same evening to the general staff, for the military visa, and that I might call for them in two or three days — on Thursday afternoon, perhaps. General Zolotnitzy volunteered to precede them now to the staff, and to speak to the officers in charge there, whom he knew, and August Andréovitch, our business man, who had friends among the lower powers in the staff-office, was sent to spread the necessary persuasion for haste, in rubles.

After starting the children back to the hotel, Tatischtcheff kept me a moment to say, " When are you really in need of the passports? " I told him the children's tickets were for the trans-Siberian train of July twenty-fourth, a week and one day off. " Then if you want to get your documents, spare no urging; for the offices are slow and disorganized now, at best, and there is a crisis pending, which may cause all work to be stopped within a few days. This afternoon there is a cabinet meeting being held to treat of the gravest questions. It is again as in May — the conservative element locking horns with the ultra-democratic crowd. I fear it means disorders in the streets, and resignations from the cabinet, unless a compromise can be found to-day. I do not say this to alarm you; but so you will follow up your papers, and push them through by every means in your power."

This coming from Tatischtcheff, who was unemotional, reliable and never pessimistic, seemed to me to carry weight; and in his position as Chief-of-Chancellery at the Foreign Office, and on excellent terms as he was with his minister, he seemed in a position to know the situation. . . . Thanks to his warning I at once went on to the bank and begged the manager,

an old friend, to take personally in hand the question of the children's letter-of-credit, and to push it through with all his powers. The American Ambassador, Mr. Francis, had promised to help me with his authority at the Finance Ministry, so I hoped for the best. By four-thirty o'clock all this was done, and I returned to the hotel for tea, and found there M. Bark, waiting for me. He instantly made minute inquiries as to how much I had accomplished to start preparations for the children's departure. I replied by reporting in detail my movements of the day. Then said he smilingly, " I see some one has already warned you of the strained period upon which we are entering. You always find friends when in need, and are so well guarded my anxiety was unnecessary. I also had come to tell you that in my opinion things politically look very serious for this week, and to beg you to let me be of any use I can." With both these usually calm men showing themselves so anxious, I became infected by their fears.

That evening, a group sat about my tea-table after dinner — friends who had dropped in for a chat. Some one was reading an article on the revolution, which had appeared in an English magazine, whose editor was filled with admiration for our great qualities. It was warm, and the windows opening on my balcony, looking over the quiet park, were opened wide; the noise of the Nevskii came to us vaguely from round the corner. The little girls with their governess and nurse had retired, while my boy sat with us. Suddenly we heard the tac-tac-tac-tac of machine-gun firing piercing the air; far off at first, then approaching rapidly. The reader stopped short, and we all looked

at one another, recognizing the familiar sound. An uprising beginning! The Bolsheviki! Evidently the conservative cabinet ministers were holding out. In a moment a hotel servant appeared, followed by my frightened maid. "Will your Highness permit me to close the windows? The hotel director begs the windows and curtains be closed immediately, and lights put out; so outside attention will not be attracted."

My guests helped the man and maid do this, while I went into the two large nurseries adjoining my salon, and gave orders for closing their windows too, not waking the girls but saying that the attendants should remain dressed for the present.

When I returned to my guests, they were sitting in the light of one small table-lamp with a dark shade. We held a hurried consultation. The hotel director sent me a second messenger to say the Bolsheviki wished to visit the premises, searching for firearms, and so on; that he had held them off momentarily, and had telephoned asking for a force of Cossacks to guard the hotel, but until these arrived, he could not stand long against the Bolsheviki's arguments, if they insisted on making a tour of inspection. He therefore warned me, so I might be ready for their visit to my rooms, in case it occurred.

I decided my guests should leave at once; their presence, and that of the tea-table, would be apt to attract attention from any visitors of sinister intent. As soon as their good-bys were said, the maids, the governess, my boy and I hid such valuables as I had with me, in various out-of-the-way places; then I rapidly changed from my house gown to a rough traveling costume, and we waited with locked doors;

but with every intention of showing ourselves hospitable (if the need presented itself) to nocturnal visitors.

From time to time, some one of my acquaintances in Petrograd telephoned to know how we were faring; and I had only good reports to give, though the battle seemed to rage all about us through the night; if one was to judge by the continuous firing. Machine guns and musketry, revolver shots and mad shouts, made a bedlam of the streets; and at intervals the deep buzz and whir of the revolutionary motor-trucks passing under our windows, carrying soldiers or prisoners, added to the din. Nurse and governess, the maid, my boy and I remained dressed, and on guard for several hours; while the two younger children, who had been wakened at first by the shooting, were reassured by being told it was "just the revolution;" and they turned over and went blissfully to sleep again.

I was really anxious as to what was happening about us, and to think that I had brought my little people into this turmoil of my own accord. I feared it might in some way prevent their departure. Then I tried to believe that within a week all would be tranquilized; and to hope that I should be able to push their papers, and get everything prepared as I wished, within the seven long days ahead. At last, about one o'clock in the morning, nothing dramatic having occurred to us, in spite of the continuous firing, I realized we must get what sleep we could, and leave the future to take care of its own problems. All our rooms communicated by inside-doors, and were at the end of a long corridor, so no one of us could be disturbed, without the others of our party being warned. Beneath our windows the lovely old square and garden

were quite empty now, the revolutionists having decided it was less exciting there than on the Nevskii-side of the hotel, where there were shops and lights and crowds. Without undressing, we lay down upon our beds, and my boy and I both slept immediately, and remained unconscious of our dangers, till nine o'clock the following morning! In fact, the maid had to come and wake me, bringing me a breakfast-tray and the news-sheets; she announced that now we were quite safe, since at four in the morning, the Cossacks had come, and were established in the hotel office, while the director had organized a patrol among the servants; and in every corridor a man was on duty to give alarm.

I was told also the restaurant would be open, only from twelve to three o'clock, to give us one hot meal during the day, after which we might have cold food and tea, with the children's milk, in our rooms. I found no one would be allowed to come into the hotel (as the doors were barred to the crowded streets) and the proprietor asked that we should not try to go out either. There were disorders everywhere, and shops, banks and offices were closed. I found out by telephone the government offices were also closed; so nothing could be done to push my papers. There was quiet in some parts of the city, and two or three old friends invited me to move with the children to their apartments. One asked us to the Foreign-Ministry building itself. But I steadily refused all these hospitable offers. The streets seemed to me very uninviting to move about in, with nurses, babies, governesses, maids and baggage. We were, in my judgment, protected by our Cossack guardians, and our

vague denomination of "tourists" in the hotel; whereas if we were to establish ourselves in a palace, whether private or governmental, we invited the attention of the multitude to a much greater extent. So we remained where we were that day and the next — Tuesday and Wednesday — as if besieged, in our big rooms; with windows closed and curtains down, to prevent any stray shots from coming in, and with only such news from the outside as the telephone and servants' rumors gave us.

The shooting increased and decreased periodically, for no apparent reason. My maid went up on the roof, and from its parapet, she saw the street fighting and the pillaging of some shops on the Nevskii. My boy also made trips to the roof and to the hotel office, where the Cossack guards were in possession, and the male guests of the hotel met to discuss our situation. A number of American tourists (businessmen) were of this group, and were greatly interested as to the changes this demonstration would bring. They thought it would last for a long time, and be serious, and that they ought to form a guard and arm themselves for any emergency. The Russian element, on the contrary, knowing our people, said it was "just disorder," and would end soon by some agreement. The American ambassador rang me up. I found him greatly interested in the complications, but he hoped the next few days would see a satisfactory solution. From Tatischtcheff, who telephoned me also, I learned that the question in the cabinet was a difficult one to settle, and that it would probably, and disastrously, bring about the resignation of the last conservative elements still in power; thus giving the

Socialists another forward push. He, like others, seemed to think this would all be ended in a few days, and through the usual influence — the cabinet's fear of mob-rule.

There were not many killed, but there had been much destruction of property. Ferocity or bloodthirstiness was shown but little by the people. General Peter Polovtzoff, in command of the garrison, was displaying great energy, doing all that could be done to make his troops act as they should. He had spent every moment since the first threats of disorder, either at his office or in the streets, where he had paraded at all hours in an open motor, preceded and followed by armored motors, to make himself impressive to the mob. He had harangued his soldiers, and told them their duty, and had placed units upon which he thought he could count best at the various government buildings. He went from one group to another, encouraging, inspecting and giving personal orders. In several instances he had, on his own responsibility, ordered men to fire. This had effectively stopped rioting, but it was far from a policy in harmony with the new régime ideas.

Polovtzoff was a very handsome man, about forty but looking younger, and carrying his picturesque Circassian uniform and arms with great elegance. He was perfectly fearless, and the officers under his command admired him immensely, and were grateful at last to have a commander who upheld some of the strong old traditions. The soldiers felt the imposing influence of his record at the front and his personality, and were awed into obedience. Rich and talented, he was an amateur explorer, who had many brilliant

pages in his past. He had spent most of his life traveling, fighting, writing and studying, also shooting big-game or farming in Africa; and he was most attractive in society, and a great success with women, through his looks and charm, while men liked him for his pluck and work. When the war broke out, the first steamer brought him home to offer his services. He was given immediately a regiment of Tartars, freshly formed in Turkestan, because he spoke their language and understood their ways. Excellent fighters these Tartars were, and Polovtzoff's officers had all been chosen by him, and were of his own dare-devil type, and volunteers. Indeed, Polovtzoff professed to be at his wit's end as to how to keep his regiment in hand when they were resting or in reserve. "In a fight they don't need me at all, though. They go right in and win."

Tuesday evening the shooting lessened, and by Wednesday evening the city was entirely quieted.

Thursday the whole town resumed its normal aspect. The trams were running, and we went about our business as if nothing had occurred to disturb life. My boy told me the Americans in the hotel were indignant that it had all ended so tamely, and without settling the questions at issue once and for all, by a real conquest, with either the mob or the government installed absolute masters of the situation.

As a matter of fact the anarchists had gained a step in their advance towards power. Prince Lvoff had resigned, and Kerensky was made Prime Minister, with various other socialistic elements put into the cabinet. All patriots, not only those of conservative ideas, were growing anxious at the lost ground each

day showed, and the increasing power of the mob and their German leaders. It was decidedly marked that Lenine's propaganda was growing more aggressive; and Trotzky, the anarchist (whost real name was Léo Brönstein) had arrived, or was arriving, to inflame the already unbalanced brains, and urge and help Lenine to do his utmost.

I was glad the children were leaving; more and more so with every hour. The young travelers were greatly wrought up at going, and though I knew it was the only way to have them reach safety in time, I felt extremely anxious at launching them into the possibilities of the long trans-Siberian voyage. They looked very young and helpless as they started off, in spite of my boy's manliness and his little sisters' confidence in his capacity to take care of them. Their old nurse and their governess were trustworthy; the former had been with me since my boy's birth, and was proud of and devoted to her children. Also, there were an American and his wife going, Mr. and Mrs. Winchell, to whom the American ambassador had recommended the children, and who were infinitely kind to them during the whole trip. I was grateful to all the group of friends and officials who had facilitated their preparations, and without whom the uprising of the Bolsheviki would have prevented my getting my young people off. As it was, the little party, well supplied with tickets, passes and funds, started for the ends of the earth, in a safe and well-appointed train; and though they had adventures and experiences, discomfort and fatigue, they ran into no dangers, and finally reached their destination safely, landing after six

weeks in San Francisco, where my mother kindly met them.

I remained on alone in Petrograd for two days after I had seen the children depart, attending to some business; and before leaving for Kief, I saw the attack and capture by storm of the Lenine headquarters. These were in the ex-palace of the Kcéschinskaia, first "ballerine" of the Imperial theaters. It was a large, detached palace or villa, opposite the Fortress of Peter and Paul, and near the Trinity-Bridge. One side of the building faced on the street, and one on its own entrance-courtyard, while the other sides looked into its charming garden, which made the corner of two streets. A high wall edged these, and where the streets met at the wall's angle, stood a small round summer-house, which had been the pulpit used by Lenine and his followers to preach their poisonous doctrines to the Russian world. Lenine had been an exiled nihilist under the old régime, and had lived in Switzerland. One of the first measures of the revolution had naturally been the pardoning and repatriation of all political prisoners and exiles. This was without distinction as to what opinions they held, or what their individual reputations were. To everyone's surprise, instead of going around, Lenine returned home directly through Germany; and though he explained he was not allowed to stop, or get out at any station, we heard he had been the recipient of every possible attention during his travels in the enemy's country. On his arrival he at once took possession of Kcéschinskaia's palace, which she had abandoned in terror at the first sign of the revolutionary

movement (feeling probably that her well-known connection with the Emperor in the past, and with two of the grand dukes in the present, put her in danger). The ballerine protested at her property being requisitioned by the Leninists, but she was intimidated into silence. Daily, Lenine or one of his lieutenants preached their fiery sermons from the little corner summer-house, and distributed pamphlets to the listeners below them on the sidewalks. At all hours there was a speaker, and a crowd, which at first went to scoff and criticize; then after a time, the new government having proclaimed complete toleration of all political theories, the orators began to make new converts who, as they demanded the maximum of socialism, took the name of "Maximalists"— in Russian, "Bolshéviki"— and became a declared party; though they made no noisy demonstration before the end of April. It was found that certain of their group had German gold coins about them. The government through its weakness in troops could not act, though; and Lenine stayed on at the capital, playing his waiting game, talking, working always, especially among the poor. Polovtzoff now, in the second uprising, decided the nest of this propaganda must be cleaned out, and suddenly one evening he bombarded it with machine guns; took the fortress by storm; and captured about thirty of the plotters, though not Lenine himself, who had fled into Finland as soon as he had discovered the failure of the uprising. Documents were found in the house which showed up the Leninists in their relationship to the enemy, and German gold was captured.

I had been dining that evening at the American Em-

bassy. Two or three days after the uprising, it was, and as the town was only superficially quiet, and the night splendid and warm, Mr. Francis proposed when we left, about ten o'clock, to drive another guest and myself home; affording us the protection of his carriage, with its American flag. It was still twilight, with a splendid after-glow fading on the horizon, and the charm of the soft July sky, caused the Ambassador to say as we settled into our seats; "It is early yet, and we have all been shut up for so long. I haven't left my desk to-day. Shall we go round by the Quai, and admire the river on the way to your hotel, Princess? It is but ten minutes more drive by that way."

I naturally gave an affirmative reply, and we all drew a deep breath of pleasure as we turned out on to the Quai, the most beautiful street I know, with its great palaces on one side and the swift, vast expanse of river on the other. Soon we were passing the Summer-Garden, and the British Embassy stood up in front of us, while the long elegant curves of Trinity Bridge, clear against the sky, spanned the river, and joined the Field of Mars to the Fortress of St. Peter and St. Paul.

"It doesn't seem possible we have been so agitated these last days," I said. "No," said Mr. Francis; "certainly this time the provisional government has held its own." "See, there are the fortresses of the government and of Lenine, standing opposite one-another, and at peace," I said; and then we both noticed a light playing on them. "What do you suppose that light means? A signal?" said our host. "Or perhaps just one of the naval searchlights being tried," I answered. Suddenly the silence across the

river was broken, a shot was fired, and then an avalanche of them rang out, and the whole space between Peter and Paul and the Kcéschinskaia palace was alive with soldiers and with guns, flashing and banging — bedlam let loose again!

"Hello, that looks serious," said Mr. Francis.

The coachman, without asking for orders, whirled his plunging horses completely round, and started back in the direction whence we had come. I instructed him to turn into the first side street and, avoiding thoroughfares, to take the short cut to my hotel. He was entirely self-possessed and obedient. I then made my excuses to the Ambassador for taking things into my own hands, and explained what I had ordered; asking his permission to go through to my home this way. Mr. Francis didn't mind or seem in the least nervous, though he was very anxious as to what new political difficulty this might bring forth.

When we arrived at the hotel, I was able to furnish my host with the desired information. I found the director knew of the intended action on the Lenine headquarters, and could reassure us as to the general security of the city. . . . Polovtzoff had taken the citadel of disorderly propaganda, proved its connection with Germany, and arrested twenty or more of the leaders of the party. He had obtained the obedience of the men under his orders, and had quieted the city within forty-eight hours. Now he even dared publish an "order-of-the-day" to his soldiers, saying he wished to see them appear in the streets with their uniforms properly buttoned, their arms cleaned and in order; and with their general aspect such, that he could

tell, when he looked, the members of the garrison from deserters or tramps.

Within a short time, in spite of this record, Polovtzoff was summarily dismissed, and the reasons for it, given out officially, were his over-severity with the soldiers, as embodied in his order to appear properly dressed, his intolerance towards one political party in these days of freedom, and his having sent to prison members of a legitimate group in the new Russian organization!

The arrested Bolsheviki, though liberated after a few weeks in prison, showed themselves greatly embittered. With the full knowledge and consent of the ministry, they at once took up their old habits and headquarters, continued their propaganda, and finally even published several newspapers. The government apparently was too weak to assume anything but a propitiating attitude towards these avowed anarchists; or else there was no feeling in administrative circles of danger to the nation from the Lenine and Trotzky theories. It all seemed fatal in its menace for the future of the country to those of our class, who had no desires politically, and who thought only of winning the war, and of preserving Russia; but our military and conservative groups had lost the power even to speak.

CHAPTER XV

THE RISE OF THE BOLSHEVIKI

From July on, Kerensky seemed to lose his grip on things somehow, and to change both his personality and his policy. Whether this came from ill-health, and his breaking down under the strain of his varied occupations and responsibilities; or whether he realized some of the dramatic failures of the revolution, and this affected his capacity; or whether it was simply that he was not the type of man to stand his personal success, it is difficult to say. In the early days he had been of the people and disdained luxury. Now he moved to the Winter Palace, occupied the Emperor's suite there, sleeping in the Emperor's bed, using his desk and his motors, giving audience with much form and ceremony, and surrounding himself with luxury and sentinels.

The capital gossiped much. The conservative group, who until now had been full of admiration for Kerensky's honesty and patriotism and had trusted him, became disillusioned. The Socialists felt their golden statue was uncovering feet of clay, and his own cabinet was helpless. One of the ministers said that he had frankly told Kerensky his present attitude was that of a small man, and would greatly diminish his prestige with all classes. But protests seemed to have as little effect now as they had had under the

old régime. Kerensky considered himself the idol of the soldiers, peasants, and rough street groups. As the weeks passed, there were murmurs against him, only vague at first; but his policy was to keep his personal popularity at any cost; and the price of it, became a constant flow of concessions to the nation's baser instincts. This lasted through July and August.

My trip back to Kief was without adventure. The quiet hours in the train came as a welcome rest, after the exciting experiences of my stay in the capital. I had time to digest all the impressions of the two weeks just passed. It seemed to me more than ever certain we were in desperate straits, and that the well-to-do population would be called upon to pay the price of government mistakes in the past, and also that for possible future progress. I saw no help for us as a group, nor for the country, unless through a miracle of the eleventh hour; and from where should this miracle now come?

I lay awake reading and thinking until late into the night, as the train moved southward. In the corridor of the car a dozen or more soldiers were sleeping heavily. I heard them breathe and turn. One was half sitting, half leaning against my door, which occasionally creaked behind his weight. During the afternoon they had been talking politics loudly; and such nonsense as to what the revolution would do had been passed round that I grew desperate in the thought of their lack of understanding. One old fellow sat silent during all these discussions, and while our berths were being prepared for the night, these rough men made me standing room among them, and I found myself next the quiet fellow. I was chilled and

tired, and I shivered, saying to him, "It is cold to-night, little father." "Yes," he replied. "And there is no wood to heat the car with." "True; that is because there is so much disorder everywhere, not because wood is lacking in our Russia." "No, lady. There is much of all here, but we cannot get it." And then I ventured, wondering what he would answer: "I am surprised, because I thought the revolution would remedy the ailments of the old régime, and it seems even worse now; or perhaps it is only to my eyes?" "Oh, no," said my soldier with dreary resignation. "It is much worse. In the old days, at least there was order, and some wood, also provisions; and then when it was cold weather, there was vodka to be had, to warm oneself with; and that helped much. . . ."

Now in the silence of the night his speech came back to me, and I wondered what would become of all these lowly people, some of whom were so ignorant as to be demanding "a republic with a czar;" and I wondered who would be the more helpless, they or ourselves. They were readily and always a prey of enemy propaganda, while we nobles were feeble by our small numbers to help the lamentable darkness of their minds and souls. Would they, with vague instincts and strong bodies, be able to go on; not only with the war, but in the great battles for their historical development?

As this thought crossed my mind, the soldier against my door woke up, moved, and cleared his throat; then gently, so low as to wake none of his comrades, he began a crooning, chanting, harmonious song, in a soft minor key, unutterably sad and sweet, full of the

pent-up suffering and longing of his whole primitive race. Though it was uncultured, his voice, like many of our peasants' voices, was beautiful beyond words; and I regretted my incapacity to gather up this passing thread of sound, and weave from it, for a violin to to sing in other times, its lament for the past, and the hope for the future it seemed to contain. A whole hour and more the lovely strain went on; and finally it died away, as the singer fell asleep again. There had been no single note of discord, and no repetition in the long harmony, yet this artist soul belonged to a medium sample of our Russian soldiers — those who had helped to save Paris, first by their plunge into East Prussia at the war's beginning; and who had then so patiently suffered, fought and died, in 1915, during our great retreat; who had afterward, when ammunition came, with unimpaired bravery and discipline, launched renewed offensives, and recovered partly the territory lost, and had given France again the relief she asked for in 1916 from the strain on her front and on Verdun.

Now influenced by the poisonous German propaganda, which was being daily injected, these same big, childish creatures of the plains and woods were working themselves into a passionate folly, and were suffering from hideous moral indigestion, following too much liberty, which might well bring about their own ruin, together with that of the whole country. And seemingly no one could help us now, while it was still time! Everyone, at home and abroad, was either too busy, or was blind. Some said we had primitive strength enough as a nation to live through our trials, and after knowing these people for so many years I

was of those who kept faith in their final resurrection. I only wept for the sufferings and destruction, which the immediate future must bring, and for the reaction of our troubles on the war. It took all my courage to face the months ahead, and I wondered whether I should leave Kief alive and with my husband; or whether we should find our end there, in some bloody catastrophe.

Kief seemed enchanting after the capital, with its gay streets and gardens, its charming luxurious homes, and the great, splendid, picturesque piles of ancient monasteries and churches, crowned by their numerous golden domes. All this was reassuring to my sad spirits. It looked and felt like old times here, and I began to believe again in the ideals of the revolution, and in its success. There were of course numerous untidy soldiers about, but their type was less aggressive than in Petrograd, and they were less in evidence. The well-to-do element seemed to dominate in the crowded streets, and wore contented faces. I was delighted to pile myself and my small baggage into Çantacuzène's big motor (leaving Eléne and Davidka to struggle for the trunks) and to be whirled off by our smart soldier-chauffeur to the pretty house into which my husband had already moved.

Mme. Ivanoff, an old acquaintance of ours, had been ordered by the municipal government to lodge some of the military who overflowed the town; and in looking about for people least apt to disturb her ease, and her old servants, she begged us to come and settle with her for the time of my husband's detail in Kief. We were very pleased to accept; and though she made some difficulties over taking the price we proposed,

she finally consented to all our ideas, even to remaining with us herself and looking after the housekeeping. So we were going to be really comfortable in our new home, which was altogether attractive. It was next door to the general staff offices, which was very convenient for Michael, and back of the house, we possessed a most lovely small lawn and garden, into which a balcony was built from the dining room. There for weeks during the hot summer weather we sat, took our meals and received our friends. I at once loved the place, and grew very fond of the little quaint old lady, its owner; and the months we spent with her, and the dramatic experiences we lived through together, only drew us closer to one another.

It was very hot at first and I was weary from my travels and emotions, but Kief was full of acquaintances, and there were even several old friends settled there or passing through. I found my husband was the center of an agreeable group, whose motto was openly to "Eat, drink and be merry, in the insecurity of the morrow." Life was expensive, but people had plenty of ready money, and were trying to spend it on their immediate enjoyment; since rumors floated southward that there might be later a general confiscation of ready funds for government needs. Everyone kept open house in the cosmopolitan society, composed of rich Polish refugee nobles, of the members of the French aviation unit stationed at Kief, of those men who like Cantacuzène were stationary in the city, and of the floating elements of officers on leave, or Petrograd and provincial notabilities, passing through town for a few days' rest and pleasure. Parties on the river, auto-picnics to châteaux in the neighborhood,

dinners and suppers with gypsy-bands and chorus, bridge and even tangoes, poker, and romances were the order of the day. It seemed even gayer than in the spring, perhaps a little feverishly so.

What was happening in the upper strata, was also going on among the people in the streets, parks and cheap restaurants. One had the impression of a wild festival in every class. My quiet maid was introduced immediately into a circle of gay soubrettes and grand Cuirassiers, and had a most exciting time; she adores Kief to this day.

Sometimes the conversations I heard struck me as incongruous: hideous details of the Tarnopol disaster or gloomy forebodings of our probable future contrasted with jokes and laughter which preceded or followed them. The officers were more than ever pessimistic, and had good reasons to wish for a few days of forgetfulness. The great proprietors from neighboring provinces were increasingly discouraged by the development of the situation on their estates during the late summer; and those like the Cantacuzènes who had to do with the government, as well as with the army, were infinitely anxious under their official masks of calm.

After the Ukrainians were granted their privileges, they became a thorn in my husband's side, and the civil officials sent to Kief by the provisional central government were also in despair. Of these, two were exceptionally intelligent men, whom Cantazucène found excellent and most reliable collaborators in his task. It was very amusing to witness the relations of these three, and the perfect harmony that reigned by the strength of their common, ardent patriotism, and

their desire to help the country through the terrible problems they were daily facing. Cantacuzène's aristocratic traditions and title, his high rank at the ex-court, and his military honors, mixed strangely but well with the traditions of Oboroutcheff, who was a native of Kief, a social-democrat by conviction, of comfortable bourgeois class, and who had been elected to his place since the revolution, which he had helped to make. He filled his position of "military administrator" of the district with a keen desire to see the movement for democracy a success, and himself and his class put into power permanently by the vote of a lawful constituent assembly. He was ready to work faithfully to this end, and was of the greatest assistance to my husband. They became warm friends, and remained so.

Kirienko, Cantacuzène's other colleague, was quite different. Ardent and enthusiastic in his revolutionary ideals, he dreamed of Russia in the future as a socialistic republic, strong and brilliant, ready to lead the world, when the lowest should be exalted from their present misery, and all men should be brothers. He believed, however, these conditions would only come about slowly, through honest work and intention, and that they could not be introduced by proclamations, or by destruction of people and property. In the past he had spent seven years in Siberian exile, a political prisoner; and he told my husband this time "had been most useful to him, giving him quiet enough to think, and to overcome the inflammatory side of his politics and theories." He was of Kerensky's party — the social revolutionary — but was, it seemed, entirely sincere, and lacking in personal ambition. He showed

great courage in facing responsibility and making decisions. With his reputation as a martyr, he appealed to the populace, while by degrees the conservative group grew to have confidence in his loyalty. He came to Kief as "Commissioner" of the central government, and had in charge the civil administration of the city and the province. Tall, immensely strong physically, hearty, bluff, eloquent, but with a great calmness and sense of justice, as well as much reserve, he commanded esteem and remained a noble figure in his leadership, until the fall of the provisional government. He frankly and deeply bemoaned the mistakes of the latter, and their not seeing clearly the power was drifting into the hands of the worst elements in the country; and he constantly warned Kerensky, his chief in Petrograd. With these two men Cantacuzène was saved much petty strife, and he sincerely admired and respected them both.

Thus we drifted through July and August. There was talk always of the constituent assembly, but no step had as yet been taken for arranging the elections.

The Ukrainians were augmenting their propaganda, with evidences of success. They were now established in a great and beautiful building, which had been presented as a museum to the city by one of its rich citizens, and which they had "requisitioned," throwing its valuable collections into the street. The donor had vainly tried to save them, and after ineffective appeals to the municipal authorities, he had had a heart-stroke and had died. . . . In these halls was established the rada, or senate, of the Ukraine, while their government offices were near-by, in a hotel of ill repute, which had been confiscated also.

Since they now figured in the province's administration, my husband and others had to treat with them on every question pertaining to our estates. All who visited the rada and the Ukrainian ministries returned disgusted; saying they had had to do with a lot of second-rate bounders, and had found wild confusion, while unlimited pretensions were the marked trait of the new party, whose only effective work was in spreading propaganda of disorder and disloyalty, dictated by their Austrian masters.

At the Imperial palace in Kief, which had been seized by the rabble when the Empress Mother vacated it, the committees of workmen and soldiers held forth. These (probably by order of their German heads) left most of the work of contamination in Kief to their Austrian friends of the rada, though they pretended to have nothing in common with the latter. The committee or soviet government contented itself with stealing provisions and all sorts of wares, which they secreted in the palace; and with making the charming Louis XV building into a pig-sty. Eating, drinking, smoking and noise were found there at all hours by such as were obliged to visit the offices for passports, or on other business.

The difficulties Cantacuzène and his party had in carrying out any measure of administration, with these two groups always at hand, whose special ambition it was to prevent effectiveness, are more easily imagined than described; yet this was the problem which the central government's representatives were daily obliged to face and solve. Their own headquarters at the staff-building became the citadel of law and order as weeks slipped by; but little by little the other

parties gained ground, without a chance for the smaller group to fight the sinister tide which was creeping toward them.

Committees became an epidemic everywhere; committees of workmen at Count Bobrinsky's sugar factories decided when they would work, also at what prices, and when to enjoy a holiday; and they overran the Bobrinsky park and home, camping in the rooms, and using furniture and valuables. It was the same at other factories, and production was practically at a standstill. Likewise, committees of peasants on all estates fixed their own wages and labors, and said what should be done with the master's harvests, after the year's grain was brought in. The village cows were grazing on proprietors' lawns, the village people walked in gardens and parks, ate fruits and vegetables found there, requisitioned machinery and stock, and though the châteaux were still respected, there was already talk of taking them for places of amusement or for school-buildings.

Committees in the various government departments, both civil and military, took up the time of officials or left them constantly minus typewriters, messengers, and so on, for the service, while the soldiers' committees decided whether they would accept their officers or not, and if they would obey orders.

All this created an atmosphere and situation quite indescribable. Shops were closed, with signs up saying it was because the shop girls had taken a holiday. People were constantly forced to do their own housework while the servants went to committee meetings. Masters were obliged to pay their servants eighty to one hundred and fifty rubles wages, where before ten

or twenty had sufficed. All this came by degrees, and with each week there was a new surprise, till at the end of the summer, the upper classes were greatly depressed; and lived in dread of further developments, whether on their estates, in factories, shops, hotels or homes. The masses, on the contrary, had reached the zenith of self-confidence, and were in a semi-hysterical triumphant condition.

We had luck personally, for our old servants were daily proving their devotion, and we suffered no inconvenience from any caprices on their part. My maid even had the supreme courage to refuse joining a ladies'-maids' committee, and declined also my offer to augment her wages, with which she had, it seemed, always been entirely satisfied. It was, "because we know how things are, and I consider these modern laws could only affect me if I took a new place, which I don't mean to do," she assured me. I gratefully accepted her faithful services in the uncertainty of life.

We were subjected to many small annoyances from outside, some of which turned out to be of no particular importance. Once a vague young man presented himself in our kitchen. He was supremely dirty, and was dressed in a greasy costume, which had once been a uniform, such as was worn by students of our universities in old régime times. He announced his business was in connection with the voting for the constituent-assembly, "and that the household must be brought together for him to question them." His looks led Mme. Ivanoff to decide the conference should be held in the pantry, which was large and sunny, and could be easily aired and cleaned afterward. The servants were all called in, and when they arrived,

Mme. Ivanoff and I went and sat in two chairs opposite the student, who had established himself at the head of the pantry table with some printed blanks and pencils spread before him. Such hands and nails, and such a head of hair as he possessed were unbelievable, except in the villain of a cheap play!

He began with Mme. Ivanoff, asking her age, sex, religion and political persuasions! She was called upon to state when and why she had come to Kief, forty years before, and then to give a description of her house, the number of its rooms, doors, windows, stoves, and so on. She was very careful, as we were always suspicious of unknown agents in those days, and she finished her replies with a sigh of relief.

Then my turn came. I was anxious to say nothing that might make trouble for my husband, who already had so much bother, and I curbed my tongue and patiently gave my name, age and sex, and stated I had "been in Kief two months, to visit my husband." Then I had to add detailed information as to Michael. . . . "But what do you do in Kief, lady?" "I? Why nothing. I have no occupation or profession here, and am simply with my husband." This apparently seemed to the student so improbable, that he went on questioning, till I showed impatience. Then he at once passed on to my nationality. "A Russian subject," I replied, and gave my name again, whereupon he wrote, "Russian citizeness, Princess Cantacuzène," on his paper; and "protestant," at my dictation.

Then he said, "And what is your mother tongue?" "English," I replied. "That is impossible," he announced solemnly. "It can be German, or Tartar,

or Finnish, or Lettish, or one of many others; but not English when you are a Russian citizen." "Nevertheless, it is as I say. I was born in America, and became a Russian subject about twenty years ago by my marriage; but my mother tongue is English." He was nonplused, and quite unable to accept this idea. Deciding to try temper and to bluff I finally said, "I was a *citizen* for twenty-three years at least, before you were born at all, and in a republic long since formed, where there was law and order. Then I became a Russian subject; and now I seem again to be a citizen in a republic. I don't mind all these changes, but it is a great bore to hear such nonsense about what *I* already know from forty years' experience." He looked as if he thought I was crazy, and said soothingly, "Do not be hurt and annoyed, lady. I am obliged to ask these questions." I protested he made them very long, and that it annoyed me extremely to go over things which Mme. Ivanoff had already told him. I was perfectly willing that he should call my mother tongue "Chinese" if he liked; and I had no politics. . . . I imagine I was the first of my kind he had met in those days of hot discussions, and that he would have enjoyed telling me the advantages of being a citizen now in the great Russian republic; but he had finally understood and accepted the fact that I was not willing to continue indefinitely our conversation.

I think he was rather frightened, and the invaluable Davidka came to my rescue, when the man's questions turned upon my husband. To the valet's extreme indignation, our examiner seemed never to have heard of Cantacuzène; and then, when to information on

his own origin, he added he served with the Cuirassiers in Kief, and he found the student ignorant of them, I departed, leaving Davidka to tell the regiment's history in an angry loud voice, and to help catechize the other servants. Several of these were not at home, and it was apparently unnecessary to have them inscribed at all. . . .

We never heard or saw any results of this visit. I imagined it was merely one of personal curiosity and cheekishness; or that it was a manner of sending agents about the town, to investigate under cover of any official excuse, how many and what kind of people lived in houses in the richer quarters; and whether it would be best to attack them, through burglaries at night, or visit them by day, and "requisition" things openly, in the name of the government. Our large group of menservants probably made our home seem a discouraging proposition, and so we were dropped from this young agent's list.

The Cuirassiers kept their heads, and continued as they had begun. They had a committee of course, but it always voted to obey their regimental officers, and it continued to uphold traditional discipline. Through forgetfulness — or intention — the regimental banner continued to carry proudly at the top of its pole the double-headed eagle of ancient days. Everyone was puzzled that a group so placed, acted as these men did, and many were the questions addressed to my husband as to how he had accomplished the miracle of holding them together. But his anxiety increased daily, in spite of this triumph. He felt his Cuirassiers must one day succumb to the general contagion, and

even if they didn't, the obedience of a single regiment was little to count on in the acute situation.

Some of the efforts by which the lower classes tried to show their new powers were entirely unsuccessful, largely from lack of knowledge as to how they must act, and these failures were really very comic. There was, for instance, a strike declared by the "dvorniki." These men, who cleaned our sidewalks and courtyards, and ran errands, were also night-watchmen, and looked after passports for the inhabitants of each house (by police regulation). Many large apartment houses kept three or more of them. Suddenly these now formed committees, and deciding they would do none of their special work, called a strike. Our own Grigory went out with seeming unwillingness, being a good man, and with little to do, since our household was small. He had always been content with his place and wages, and had lived with Mme. Ivanoff for fifteen years or more; but he was told he must also profit by the new liberties, and "protect the revolution"; otherwise he would be punished by his fellows who were less contented than he. So, dressed in his best clothes, he went out to meetings during all the day, returning home only to eat and sleep, and doing no work of course. During the week of their strike, a deputation of dvorniki came to call on Mme. Ivanoff. The deputation was announced, and it waited in the hall, and seeing our little hostess really frightened, my husband offered to receive them for her. She accepted; and Cantacuzène — followed by Prince Kourakine, who was visiting us, by the ever-faithful Davidka, and by a small boy, our "buttons"

who ran errands for the household — threw both panels of the door open suddenly with a loud noise. The deputation hesitated. These bullies had expected to face one small, old, feeble woman, and not three solid men in uniform; besides a grinning boy! . . .

"What do you want here?" Cantacuzène shouted, with his most ferocious scowl. The leader of the band stepped forward. "Comrade," he began in the revolutionary phrase; but he never got any farther. My husband's vocabulary, already rich for such occasions, had coined new treasures of speech in these revolutionary days; and one after another rolled forth sonorous arguments and appellations, red-hot! What he thought of these times, with their disorder, of the strikes in general, and what of the dvorniki and of this deputation in particular, he said; thoroughly enjoying having an occasion of letting himself go. We couldn't in detail follow his speech from where we sat in the salon. Our impression was merely of a single terrific explosion; but when he had concluded, the men before him thoroughly understood that Cantacuzène did not consider himself their "comrade." He ordered them out; and they, without a word, turned; and all together rushed frantically to the front door, pushing and stumbling in their haste, as they fumbled with its fastenings. At last it opened. They tumbled over one another, down the three steps into the street; and fled, running at full speed to the corner, where they disappeared. They never returned, and we heard nothing further of the strikers' pretensions. . . . A few days after this the house owners, having formed a committee for self-defense in such cases, categorically refused to grant any of the demands made of them;

whereupon the dvorniki gave up their strike, and took up their work again quietly exactly on the old terms! Our own dear Grigory returned to us, removed his best clothes, and with a contented smile went on with his sweeping as of old.

As yet our country place, Bouromka, was quiet, which was a great blessing. We gratefully attributed this to our intendant's personal talents. He was of peasant birth, and of our province; and he showed himself most adroit in handling men. Also, he got on with the village committee, where we knew he was expending money as well as eloquence; but since he succeeded in getting the year's crop sown, grown and harvested, and kept the gardens, park, stables and château unmolested, we were content. Bouromka was furnishing us with provisions, and supplying my mother-in-law with them, in her Crimean villa. . . . When the harvest was disposed of, we found there had been a slight deficit, instead of the usual fine revenue; but we were so pleased to have the estate still untouched that we carried this burden easily enough. In September there came to Bouromka village, however, a committee from outside; Ukrainians and Bolsheviki, the intendant reported they were, and these preached the most inflammatory doctrines.

The peasants were still resisting, explaining they were content with us, and that their work had always been well paid for, and themselves well treated. The agitators then said the land was by right the peasants', and they declared the house, buildings and stock should be appropriated by them now, as everything, according to the law of our new republic, belonged to the people. Still the peasantry was quiet, but we knew

our hour would soon come, and this anxiety for the old family home was added to other troubles. My husband was eaten up with the weight of his responsibility, and the strain of pouring oil on the troubled political seas of Kief. Life became so exhausting that we quite gave up all effort to go into society; and we never moved from home, where my salon remained generally filled by various people who came to talk of their troubles and vexations; and to tempt us into replying with tales of ours.

I caught myself wishing sometimes that events would go more quickly, and the situation reach the collapsing point soon. The strain of waiting was so great, it seemed easier to reach the end, when we could leave and should not have each day to face some new annoyance.

Though it was already September, Kerensky's government had kept none of its promises. We were no nearer to the constituent assembly than we had been in March. The army was rapidly disintegrating, and was not being supplied with either food or clothing in any sufficient quantity. Deserters roamed the country, selling their uniforms, and every other sort of stolen goods, and intimidating inhabitants back of the lines everywhere with their depredations. Traveling had become torture, from the overcrowding, and stealing, and the constant risk to life and limb, through the soldiers who packed the car roofs and platforms, as well as their corridors. All Russia was infested with bands of criminals let loose from the prisons, who were plundering, murdering and burning. These were dressed invariably in uniforms, and announced themselves as "Bolshevik soldiers." There were in Kief,

Moscow and Petrograd, associations of deserters, as open in their propaganda as were the political parties. Everywhere provisions and manufactured goods were growing scarce, and prices of necessities were soaring tremendously. . . . On the other hand, money was almost worthless. In two and a half years of the war, previous to the revolution, I was told only three billions of rubles had been issued in paper by the old régime, which had been greatly reproached for its extravagance. While since the revolution nine billions had been issued in six months; and the government presses were breaking down from the strain of printing so much. The design of the bills was simplified and their size cut down, to save time and paper; and the people were suspicious of the new productions; said they represented no value, and were not real money. In many of the shops where the proprietors were poor, the new paper was refused in payment for goods. Disrespectfully, the public gave these creations, the name of "Kérenski," and it was the first open sign of their demi-god's waning favor. Government officials and the army were paid in "Kérenski," while the bills of the old régime were collected in private, some even being bought at a premium. It was whispered about that these ancient moneys were passed on to agents, who were gathering them up for use by the Germans when the latter should occupy Russia. . . .

Such was the state of the country when, at the great conference in Moscow, representatives of all parties appeared and were invited to express their opinions and advice. All save the Bolsheviki had been called. It was much remarked that General Korniloff, ex-

commander of the Petrograd garrison, and now commander-in-chief of the army, was given a tremendous ovation by the public, when he spoke detailing all the miserable facts connected with our situation. He implored the government to act, and with a firm hand to uphold the ideals which had been in everyone's mind at the beginning of the revolution. Especially he begged laws might be enacted to suppress lack of discipline in the army, and to abolish the ridiculous measures, which had made our magnificent fighting machine the tragic farce it had become.

Korniloff spoke splendidly, and commanded admiration not only from all his hearers, but also from the various press organs, which all over Russia printed his speech next day. He offered to risk acting himself in the matter of the army, begging only that the administration uphold him by its authoritative consent, and saying that he would take and face the responsibility and unpopularity, any repressive measures would cause to their inaugurator.

Kerensky's appearance at the conference had created comment against him, as he had quite evidently lost much of his prestige. He was trying to regain it, by expressing a desire for concessions to the very lowest elements. He seemed artificial, and had lost his fire; his catchwords, grown old, seemed meaningless, and were without effect. Essaying explanations of the dramatic mistakes of the past months, he was unconvincing; while the other ministers of his cabinet who tried to speak received no encouragement whatever. They offered the long-suffering public merely accounts of the general failure of their efforts, as they told of the congested railroads, insufficient funds and harvest,

and of the factories closed, and the population victimized by six months' disorders.

This Moscow conference, from which much had been hoped, broke up without coming to any conclusions; and its results were only to confirm the general sense of danger, and of restless anxiety; and to show up the hopelessness of our country's situation. At its end, there was a Bolshevik demonstration in Moscow, with shouted accusations that the government had invited only "conservatives and counter-revolutionists" to take part. As usual, there was no armed force to protect the cabinet or conservatives, so the conference broke up, and the ministers left Moscow as rapidly as possible. Then the rabble quieted. Korniloff returned to staff headquarters at Moghileff, and the government to Petrograd, while Rodzanko, General Brusiloff, and all others who were long since revolutionists, but now were called counter-revolutionists and were forced quite out of public life, disappeared from view permanently.

CHAPTER XVI

KORNILOFF AND KERENSKY

The taking of Riga by the enemy, with the complete rout of our army on the northern front, a threatened invasion of Petrograd, the tragedies of officers, and shock-battalions annihilated, the masses of our soldiers who would not fight,— all this followed immediately upon the Moscow conference, proving General Korniloff to have been right in his predictions. It was all too hideous! The massacres, the burning of châteaux and villages by our own fleeing soldiers gone wild, were none the less dreadful, because we knew how wonderfully courageous, patient and strong they had been, but a short year before. We realized that Order Number One to the Army was to blame; and was of a piece with the propaganda of the German spies living in our lines all summer, and with the hob-nobbing across, from our trenches to the enemy's, as between brothers.

Immediately after these terrible events, came the tremendous sensation of the "Korniloff affair." News of this reached us as a thunderbolt one morning when our Kief papers announced that Korniloff, commander-in-chief of the army, was arrested at his staff, by government order; that Korniloff was at the head of troops going to attack the capital; then that General Krimoff was marching to attack the capital; and that

Kerensky was marching at the head of the city troops to defend himself! Then for several days all communications between Kief and Petrograd were entirely cut off, and for a time we heard nothing further of the drama, either by wire, by post or through the press. But we had our own excitement, which seemed amply sufficient. The first morning when Cantacuzène read the news, he foresaw the possible complication which presented itself for our Kief garrison. Korniloff and a group of his followers were evidently trying to demolish the authority of Kerensky and the provisional government, which they had sworn to serve. Our soldiers' committees would meet to discuss the problem of whether they should follow their military leaders' movement, or stand by the government. Probably it would mean bloodshed, a division of opinion and the town upside down within a few hours. . . .

My husband decided to take the bull by the horns, and to meet this crisis, as he had that of the revolution in March. Calling together his regimental and squadron commanders, he ordered them to see that the soldiers' committees in each of his units met at once, and that all the published and contradictory telegrams should be read before them. The officers were to tell their men that they themselves had but just learned this news, and they knew nothing beyond what the printed sheets contained; that if anything further reached staff headquarters it would at once be given out; and meantime in the crisis the commander wished everything to be done to keep order in Kief. Also, that in his estimation, everyone's first duty was to stand by his sworn allegiance to the provisional government. This move would make the officers and soldiers feel at one in

their sentiments, would keep the commander informed as to the committees' intentions, and would prevent unnecessary difficulty, till more could be learned from the north!

The officers present wanted my husband to accompany them and speak to the men himself, but Cantacuzène refused, saying their strength would be augmented, if each officer acted on his own initiative and, as it were, spontaneously; while his own influence could be called in as a reserve authority, in case things went less well than he expected. Nearly everyone present at this meeting of officers personally admired Korniloff, and sympathized with his desire to better matters, but all agreed the move, by its vague and disconnected character, could only create ill-feeling everywhere, between classes — making indignation rife among the lower members of society, who would be for Kerensky, and who would accuse Korniloff and the upper strata of desiring to replace the present independence by ancient severities. Consequently, the whole movement was clumsy and would mean renewed persecution for our officers, all along the line.

Within an hour all of my husband's subordinates had rejoined their units in Kief and its environs, and his orders had been carried out, with tact and intelligence. After some discussion, the decision was taken everywhere by the troopers to await further news quietly. All that afternoon, members of soldiers' committees crowded our anteroom and Cantacuzène's private office, questioning personally their old commander; while my salon received a continuous stream of officers, who spent the hours in conjecture as to what was happening in the north; and what the result of

Korniloff's move would be to Russia. No one talked or thought of anything else. It seemed evident to us that after his speech at Moscow, the commander-in-chief, who was a self-made man of the people, and a true patriot, had lost all hope of the administration ever being able to improve matters; and he consequently had decided to take things into his own hands, and strike a blow to save the army and our national honor; — engaged to carry through the war — but how and why he had acted in the mad manner the reports indicated, remained quite incomprehensible. In case of failure, he would make matters much worse, and it was almost certain such a plot must fail.

In truth, this the worst was exactly what happened. The soldiers sent to fight against those of the capital's garrison, immediately deserted to the side of the latter. After the troops had fired a few vague shots, they fraternized; and deciding then that this was a counter-revolution, of course planned by officers and retrogrades, they proceeded to persecute the former element all along the front, in every garrison, and on all our warships, for their supposed knowledge of, and sympathy with, the movement. In some cases the troubles amounted to little more than a disrespectful expression of suspicions. In other places it took the form of arrest and dismissal of officers by the committees of soldiers, accompanied by threats; but in a great number of cases, groups of officers were tried hurriedly and executed; or were even killed without trial, in the most appalling circumstances, after the infliction of tortures going back to the Middle Ages for their inspiration.

Certainly Korniloff had been animated by the best

sentiments, but it was equally certain that he completely missed his lofty aim, and that his conduct aggravated a thousand times our already terrible plight. As one of the officers said, with great bitterness, "We had lived through six months, and in many cases had won over our men to believe in us, and often we had even managed to work in with the committees, getting the best from them, and suppressing the worst. And now all that valuable ground is lost, and we stand on a volcano with our lives in our soldiers' hands, minus their confidence, dependent on their caprice."

In various units the fermentation took different forms, but in none was there the brilliant showing of the Cuirassiers, always an exception to the general rules. Two or three days after the bomb of the Korniloff affair had exploded, a soldiers' committee meeting was held at the Cuirassier camp, when a vote of confidence in all their officers was passed unanimously, and a young officer, Prince Tchérkassky, was elected president of the soldiers' committee. After this Michael walked on air, as far as the behavior of his own troops in any emergency went; but, alas, these were only a very small part of our army, and the rest were scarcely better than a vague horde of wild men.

All the people I had ever met in Kief came to have tea with me, in the few days following this act of the Cuirassiers; principally to find out if the fairy tale of their behavior was true, and to congratulate my husband upon his triumph, and his influence with the men of his command. Soon communications were established with Petrograd again, and we read more of the fiasco, and of the large group of generals who were supposedly mixed in the plot, and were arrested and

confined with Korniloff at the staff. Curiously enough, in spite of his proclamations, Kerensky never pursued the accused by court martial; while Korniloff invited a trial, and announced in the newspapers through the whole country, that he had positive proofs to show, the plot had been of Kerensky's invention, and that he had only followed orders, which he had received from the Prime Minister himself.

Round this there was much talk of course, but nothing was proved; and we heard of the farcical battles about the capital, which had lasted but a day. We knew little of the disturbances in the city, or of General Krimoff's suicide or murder, after a prolonged interview with Kerensky. The latter, now "dictator" by self-nomination, made a proclamation to all Russia, accusing these generals, "upheld by certain other retrograde elements," of making a disloyal attempt to upset "the people's government." He now came before the public in his final rôle of demagogue, and his hysterical utterances from that moment on confirmed the theory of his rapid degeneration in health and brain. He could no longer be relied upon, and in fact, to us it seemed now quite evident that the Russian Government as at present constituted was doomed to fall soon from sheer incapacity; and that the power would go then surely to the Bolsheviki, who, being in German hands, would make peace or even an alliance with Germany.

My husband felt he must still stay at his post and do what he could to hold Kief, till the death of the provisional government. He decided to give up his service, however, when the Bolsheviki took over the power, using at last the right given him by his severe

wound (through which he had obtained a complete discharge from the service in 1914). He was deeply distressed over the situation. Some of the nobility with whom I talked, felt our worst enemy was the revolutionary disorder in all its forms, and our only hope was in getting discipline re-established at any cost — even through conquest by the Germans. Cantacuzène felt, on the other hand, that the poison which had sapped our vitality, had come to us through German channels, and not those of the revolution; that we could have weathered all the storms, if the enemy's spies and propaganda had been eliminated. He, therefore, following his theory to its logical conclusion, said that the worst thing which could happen to our country, was its mastery by Germany. This would inevitably come with the Bolsheviki's triumph; and he refused to remain in his place to see it.

It appeared to be but a question of three or four weeks, with the German armies overflowing the Riga front, till Petrograd might be invaded. . . . We had left in the capital a number of valuables at the bank, both papers and jewels; and all our furniture was there, as well as some trunks containing clothes and personal effects, which had remained at the lodging of our intendant. We were anxious to get at these, and either store them permanently, or destroy them in the face of the coming storm. As Michael could not leave his post at Kief, I volunteered to go to the capital for a few days, and attend to these details. With some hesitation, my husband consented to my plan, and after much red tape as to passports and the permissions from the soviet of soldiers and workmen of Kief " to travel

northward on business," I departed with the ever-faithful Elène.

It seemed to me heart-breaking to see our proud capital brought so low as I found it now. The pavement blocks in the principal streets were pried up in many places, and these holes remained unfilled. On the great Palace Square grass grew between the cobblestones, and market-women were established along the edges of the Nevskii's sidewalks, calling their wares to the passer-by. All the main thoroughfares were packed with vast crowds, standing, walking, pushing, shoving, and all shouting. I had an intense impression of dirt, and din, and chaotic movement. The streets off the large arteries were, on the other hand, uncanny and silent. Here and there a frightened-looking pedestrian hurried, or an untidy hooligan-soldier slunk along, intent on evil. Everyone who was well-dressed looked anxious, and many shops were closed. Several proprietors in the better shops where I went told me of their difficulties, and said they were closing out their business as soon as possible. They advised me to fly from the city, as life was no longer safe.

Acquaintances seemed amazed to see me, and warned me of danger; but I was fortunately able to attend to all my business most satisfactorily. I found many willing hands to help me in it; not only those of my own class, but also humbler friends, shopkeepers or workmen, whom it seemed I had helped in various insignificant ways in the past, and who now showed themselves only too ready to serve me. I was greatly touched by these demonstrations, which only went to

prove once more, how much good and gratitude there is in our people; and how devoted, gentle and kind they can be when left to their natural instincts.

We accomplished miracles in the way of having things packed and moved to the places which seemed to offer most safety; and I attended in schedule time to every detail on my long list. The hotel servants, who had served me for several years, gave me admirable care; and even in the abominable conditions, I lacked for nothing in the way of comfort. They took very special pains to call me by long and complicated titles of the old régime; and they did me many little extra services, with always their most willing smiles.

It was said to be impossible to engage places on trains leaving the capital, everything being taken for weeks ahead, so numerous were the people leaving to take refuge in the south. The general strike of railroads was expected any day; but I was lucky as usual, as a friend of mine, the hotel clerk, obtained two places for the day on which I had planned my departure. When I told of this last triumph, my words were received with laughter, and it was said, "No doubt the strike will be held over till you reach Kief in safety! You are certainly the spoiled child of the revolution, and lead a charmed existence."

I began to grow really superstitious, and to attribute my success among so many dangers to a present given me some years before by an old comrade of my husband's. It was a delightful tiny owl, carved by the famous Faberger from a precious Siberian stone. I was just starting on a journey once, and this friend had come to see me off, and had given me the trifle,

saying, "Keep it near you. It will inspire you with wisdom in emergencies, and also it will bring you luck, by finding a solution for all difficulties." Since then, the lovely little creature had always accompanied me in my dressing case, and during my revolutionary experiences it had remained ever in my pocket, till I really began to believe in its virtues, since my extraordinary luck held good in the face of my so often daring fate to do her worst.

In Petrograd, though everything seemed to me so dreadfully sad, I was, nevertheless, deeply interested in the recent development of the historical drama. In spite of the harm it brought us personally, I kept my faith somehow in the country's strength to live through its sufferings, and to recover from the reign of terror, which I knew would surely come.

I found time to see a number of friends during my stay in the capital. Their aspect had greatly changed, for no one wore elegant clothes; and even if one dined or lunched out, it was in a business suit or tailored gown, as if we were all on the point of traveling. . . . In this connection my husband accused me of remaining incorrigibly "bourgeoise" in my clothes, in the midst of the anarchistic surroundings; but I continued to dress much as usual. Even if I had gone about in torn and dirty red rags, it would not have helped me to favor with the multitude, nor would it have reflected my own mentality. On the same theory I desired, rather more than ever, to see the old group; those who were in touch with actual events especially; and to hear their opinions of the present, and their forecasts for the future. Therefore, as my work in town left my evenings free after five o'clock, I quite naturally

took up my past habits again, and spread my tea-table for a number of old habitués. Since the summer, their attitude had changed beyond recognition. They had no confidence in the present government, and many were the anecdotes told of the life, the waste of time, and the dire disorder of the clan now living in the Winter Palace. Kerensky had lost his hold. He lived from day to day, doing an hour's work, giving a few audiences and then collapsing. His colleagues complained of his inattention and vacillations. The people complained of his "bourgeois luxury." All those approaching him complained of his despotic ways. In the palace itself, dirt and danger reigned, and Kerensky feared all those surrounding him, even to the enormous bodyguard of troops, whom he had stationed in the palace himself, and who were always plotting his destruction.

General Kamaroff, in charge in old régime days of all the Imperial palaces, and who had been left in his place by the new government, because they had no one they could trust so completely, told me that after an acute illness he had been away for a week's treatment recently. When he returned he found the Winter Palace overrun with noisy soldiers, and in the palace courtyard were stationed six heavy cannon, with their accompanying men, horses, baggage and feed. In indignation he had demanded why all this? by what right, and whose order? And he had been answered with a smile by those under him, it was by Kerensky's own order; by right of his self-attributed qualification of "dictator" and "supreme-commander of the Russian armies"; and because he feared an uprising of the people! . . . Then Kamaroff, realizing the

palace could not be turned into barracks without danger to the treasures it contained, and for which he was responsible, had himself ordered the removal of the artillery, which stood so absurdly pointing guns into the windows of the palace, upon four sides of its court. He limited the dictator's guard-of-honor to certain localities of the great building; and from these parts he removed the collections, paintings and the most fragile and valuable furniture. Kamaroff also told me the palace servants, who were used to quiet lives, had come to him in a body, complaining that the soldiers of the guard stole their boots and watches and money! He had reported this, at first to the guards' officers, and was answered that they could not manage their men at all, and had no power over them. Finally, Kamaroff had embodied these complaints in a personal note to the "dictator," and the reply had been given to him by one of Kerensky's personal staff, sent to tell him that the poor Prime Minister could do nothing about it, as he feared for his own life as it was, and could not control these masses of men under him. He begged Kamaroff to arrange the matter as best he could by himself.

From two friends of Téréschtchenko, who had no knowledge of one another, I received the following story of the Korniloff affair, as having been given to each of them by the Foreign Minister himself. After the Moscow conference he, Téréschtchenko (himself in despair at Russia's situation) had gone to Kerensky, asking the latter to act in conjunction with General Korniloff to bring the country's dramatic drifting to an end. When others of the cabinet had upheld the Minister of Foreign Affairs in this, and Kerensky had

agreed to the idea, a consultation was held with the commander-in-chief, Korniloff, and plans were made for picked troops to be ordered from the northern front, under General Krimoff — who was one of our strongest commanders — and sent to the capital to arrest the heads of the anarchist party, put the present garrison of the capital in its place; and finally start the government on a new chapter of achievement, with at least some chance of success. It would then be possible, they hoped, to act in like manner in the provinces, and with the army; and, bringing the country to its senses, to continue the war. This was, of course, the last hope and a desperate one; but it had chances of success, given that the leaders, hand-in-hand, would be Kerensky the Socialist, hero of the masses, and Korniloff, who was esteemed by all classes, and adored by his own soldiers. Conservative elements were so sick of the results of our revolution, they would be glad to back any group they supposed able to inaugurate law and order. This plan obtained the consent of the two men chiefly concerned, and also of the cabinet of the one, and the staff of the other. The day was set for the execution of the scheme, and Krimoff was ordered to start from the northern front, where he was then, with his corps. Téréschtchenko was sent by Kerensky to the staff, for some last settlement of detail; but he had no sooner started, than Kerensky's courage gave out, and he changed his mind completely, seeing only a plot against himself now in the whole affair. He wired counter-orders to the staff. . . . Korniloff wired him back it was too late, that he could no longer reach Krimoff (already on the road) to recall him. Kerensky then published a proclamation

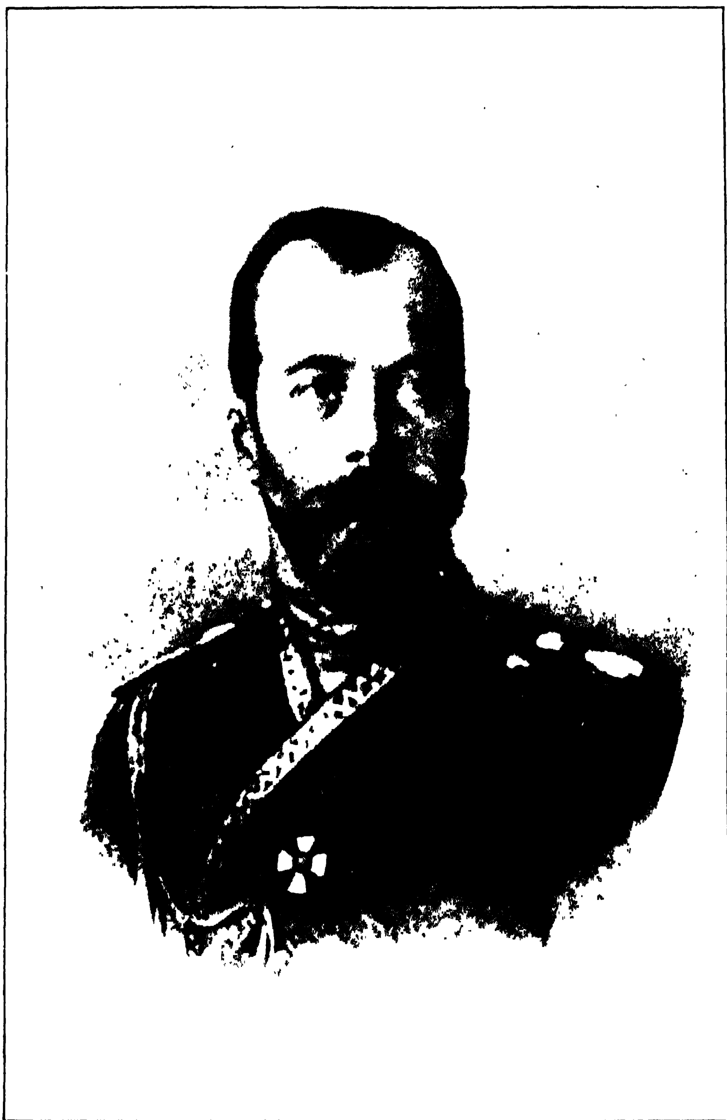
dubbing Korniloff a traitor, and the movement a "counter-revolution"; and he declared the capital to be in a state of siege, and sent the garrison troops out to meet Krimoff as an enemy. The latter, greatly surprised, finding himself faced by an official army, which he heard was sent against him by the man whom he had supposed to be his ally, rushed into the city to demand explanations of Kerensky, while his army, already converted by the city troops, remained fraternizing with the latter at the gates of Petrograd. After a discussion with Kerensky, Krimoff had died in the Winter Palace of a revolver wound; and it was said he had committed suicide through humiliation and disgust. Téréschtchenko added to this tale that he himself had rushed back from the staff, only to find the capital topsy-turvy, the garrison and Krimoff's regiments the best of friends, all the cabinet dreadfully frightened, and Kerensky hysterical. Driving straight to the Winter Palace from his train, and bringing into play all his temperamental powers, Téréschtchenko treated the dictator to a scene of such violence that the attendants were vastly impressed. Finally, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, having relieved his mind, handed in his resignation, and departed, slamming the door. I heard Kerensky wept; and having quieted his nerves sent for Téréschtchenko, begging him to reconsider his measure, as he was the last conservative in the provisional government, and if he retired, Kerensky would be obliged by the "ultra-left" to replace him with Tchernoff, uneducated and extreme Socialist — and then "where would Russia be, all through Téréschtchenko's lack of patriotism? And how could she negotiate with her Allies; and how

would the foreign ambassadors confer with such a person as Tchernoff?" Téréschtchenko accepted again the burden of his portfolio after Kerensky had gone on his knees to him.

I don't know what truth was in this story, which came to me twice over, at second-hand. It was much talked of, and Téréschtchenko had grown immensely in public esteem; especially with the upper classes. It was being said that if the present dictator and ministry fell, perhaps the Minister of Foreign Affairs would make a good head for a new provisional cabinet, in spite of his youth. People were so tired, worn, depressed and puzzled, they seemed quite tragic, and unable to react any more against the slowly advancing destruction; and they were very anxious to discover some one on whom to lean.

Certain people with whom I talked, saw in the Minister of War a man ambitious to dethrone Kerensky from his pedestal, and to replace the demagogue himself.

In all this confusion and pessimism, the attitude of the diplomats was curious to note. I was told by one or two people who had to do with them officially, that the Japanese Ambassador, judging our situation to be very grave, and our only salvation to be through military help from the Allies, had offered in his government's name a sufficient number of troops to stiffen our faltering army at the front, and to keep law and order on the railroads, and in the big centers back of the lines. He had said that as the other Allies were busy upholding the wavering French on the Western front, the Japanese were the ones whose evident duty lay in helping Russia through the crisis. He had brought



A Pre-War Portrait of His Majesty the Emperor Nicolas II

up this question at one of the ambassadorial conferences. Sir George Buchanan had replied that as long as our government did not ask for aid, the Allies could not very well force it upon Russia; also that he thought it impossible for one Ally to act alone. Therefore the Japanese suggestion had fallen through. I heard also that the French representatives were expressing great discouragement and disgust at the turn the Russian revolution had taken, and at the behavior of our people; and though they expressed sympathy with the upper classes (especially with the officers of our army) they were not over-desirous of helping us. All this came to me at second-hand, but from reliable sources, and it seemed probable each Ally's representative took exactly the point of view described. It did not surprise me that none of them felt particular confidence in the government of Kerensky, after the past six months, and after having witnessed the defeats at Tarnopol and Riga, the Korniloff affair, and the Bolshevik triumphs in the capital; but I was surprised they did not decide to bring Japanese troops in to hold the front and to save the war cause for themselves. Most of the thinking military element would have been glad to see it done, though it would have meant humiliation and suffering for us, in other directions of course.

My curiosity on one occasion led me to ask Mr. Francis something about this; and I said my husband and many officers had realized from the beginning of the revolutionary period that the only way to save Russia's army for the war, was to have Allied troops called in. The Ambassador answered me, he had once or twice given Kerensky and Téréschtchenko a chance to get such help, by telling them the United

States Government wanted to uphold Russia in *every possible manner,* and would gladly send *supplies, or men, or anything* needed, which they chose to suggest; and that the then Prime Minister had replied, asking for various other things, but saying the Russian Army was bettering its morale, and would soon be in a state of excellent "voluntary" discipline, and able to take the offensive again!

I invariably found the attitude of the American Ambassador entirely different from what was represented to me as that of his colleagues. He was the optimist of the ambassadorial conferences, and he almost inspired those about him with his own traits. He had had little to do with Kerensky, I imagine, but Téréschtchenko, who was a very charming person, had made an excellent impression, and Mr. Francis instinctively trusted him, and what he said. Through the eyes of the young Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr. Francis saw Russia's future full of renewed reforms and hopeful development. . . . The cabinet had to admit their record in the past was bad; but Téréschtchenko himself perhaps was a victim to rosy illusions; or he saw in his rôle an obligation to throw sand in the eyes of foreign representatives, and he regarded his own pose in this as one of pure patriotism. For some reason, certainly, he took pains to convince Mr. Francis that the power of republican ideals was great enough to mend everything (given time) and that it could even re-establish Russia's military strength. So Mr. Francis judged the spirit of our nation to be about that of the American colonists after their revolt, and their first establishment of a new republic. He counted on our people (ignorant as they are) to fall

into line, repair the damages of the past six months, establishing law and order, and to carry on the war, "since they must surely realize their life as a great power depended on such action! . . ."

I ventured several times to dispute these possibilities, and people about me upheld my point of view; but though Mr. Francis told me of various members of his embassy — especially General Judson, chief of the American military mission — who saw things as we did, and who had often said so to him, he maintained he had met enough other people who judged the situation from his own angle, to keep him fast in his ideas. He was one of those who spoke to me of the Minister of War, Verhowsky, who at that moment was advertising himself to the foreigners. A very clever and adroit manager and talker, this man was spreading the impression that within a month, he would have withdrawn from the army all its undesirable elements, and would then concentrate the remaining troops into a corps-d'élite, who would be reliable and ready to act offensively, if the Allies so desired it. He actually said to the Ambassadors that the thousands of drifting, dirty, soldiers, seen in the cities and on the trains, were being disbanded by his orders, and were not, as was supposed, deserters; and he affirmed that though he could not answer for what might occur back of the lines, or for the stability of the present ministry, he knew his department and the army well; and could count on them to act as he predicted. On several occasions he affirmed that the difficulty with our army was that *it was too large;* and his making it smaller would create a new effectiveness! Verhowsky somehow managed to confirm the hopes Téréschtchenko

created, and Mr. Francis believed in them both and in the present government's intention to act. I asked him if he was not leaving Petrograd, as rumor had it that all the government was moving to Moscow, and I feared for foreigners if they remained behind. It seemed to those who thought as we did that the capital was dreadfully threatened, both by Bolsheviki and by Germans, not to mention famine; but to this Mr. Francis replied, "Téréschtchenko had said there was no cause to disturb himself. The diplomats would be warned, and could depart with the government, and each embassy would have its own train, with every comfort for its members, and every security for transporting its papers, funds, and so on." Since, immediately after his nomination to the War Ministry, we had suspected Verhowsky (whom Cantacuzène had known many years) to be unscrupulously ambitious, and plotting Kerensky's overthrow for his own ends, to find the diplomats thought his dictatorship a possibility was amusing. It was upon this basis, perhaps, that some of them, without saying so, built their security. But my husband and his colleagues did not draw the same hopes from the prospect, as they thought no better of Verhowsky than of Kerensky, and wasted no admiration on either by this date.

Mr. Francis, M. Bark, General Kamaroff and a half dozen other Americans and Russians were all of my old group still in Petrograd; but these reflected nearly every shade of opinion, save that of extreme socialism. We discussed endlessly the experiences of the summer, and the future which fate held in store for Russia; and though no one ever succeeded in converting the others to his views, we all enjoyed the hours of con-

versation, as the evenings flew by; and we invariably parted with esteem and friendly feeling unimpaired.

Pessimism in all shades was reflected in Russian society. There were those who still believed we might weather the revolution, and that there would be a final mutual understanding of the nobility and peasantry, which could re-establish something of the ancient national life. Some awaited a military dictator who would rise as Napoleon did in France. There were those who thought — as I did — that a reign of terror must come, and then Russia would emerge strong and powerful, but with entirely new ideals and desires; perhaps as good as the old nation's, or even better, if one could be broad enough to accept them, and fit one's life into the new frame. Others foresaw everything would be as I thought; but said they could not live, and bend from their old-time traditions, so they preferred exile or death to living in Russia no longer a monarchy. Finally, there were those who foresaw destruction for Russia and for themselves, without hope of anything better than complete disintegration of our empire, and its conquest by Germany.

Everyone was frightened, and with good reason; but there were some splendid examples of courage and dignity in the face of danger. Such a one was old Princess Paskévitch. I heard by chance she was in town, and I went to see her, having formed long ago warm relations, which on my side were based on grateful admiration, grown up through many years of intercourse. She was called the "Little Aunt of all Society," so many were related to her; and she was greatly surrounded always, though she was a childless widow, almost blind and eighty-five years old. Her

great palace was on the Quai, and I found the pavement dragged up in spots, and the building itself barricaded, as if against besiegers. As I rang, the bolts were drawn at once and I was immediately admitted by the door porter, an old acquaintance, who greeted me with surprised enthusiasm. " What is your Highness doing in Petrograd? It is good to see your Highness; but not for long, I hope? " Then, to my question, he answered, " Oh, yes; our Princess will be glad to see your Highness. It is many days since we have had a visitor, and it will do her good."

I was taken to the princess at once; up the grand staircase as usual, and through the state apartments, to her own blue salon at their end; where I found my hostess, as she had been for the last fifty years or more, at that hour of the afternoon, seated in her black silk gown and dainty lace cap. The beautiful quiet face was unchanged in expression, as with welcoming smile she stretched out a hand which in olden days had inspired sonnets, and was still admirable. " *Ma chère enfant,* how kind in you to think of an old blind woman, in all this mess! Do sit down and tell me of yourself and your plans; and what you are doing here! "

We had a long talk and though she spoke of the situation in deep sorrow, she had faith, as had I, in the future of Russia. " Only it will not be for me to see. I am too old, and must go the way of my régime; but I am glad if you younger people keep your courage and patriotism; and I agree that you should all follow the movement and the new ideas. The old ones were bad in many ways, but I was used to them." When I told her I was in town to settle some business, and to carry off some valuables, fearing the occupation

of the capital by the enemy, and when I asked her, her plans for the near future, she said, " I have none. All my family and friends want me to move, go south, and rent a villa somewhere; but I have decided not to do so. My estates at Homel are all confiscated by the peasants' committees, and the factories on them taken over by the workmen's committee; the château is destroyed; so this house is now my only home, and I am blind, and eighty-five. . . . In the best of conditions I cannot hope to live long. There is no one to whom I owe any duty, as I have no near relation; so instead of fleeing elsewhere, looking for a very doubtful safety, in some place where I should be threatened with discomfort as well as danger, and traveling over railroads, which are a scandal of mal-administration, I am going to sit still here, till I am killed by Bolsheviki or Germans; or spared by them, and left to die tranquilly in my own bed. Here, at least, I have quiet, and all my furniture and souvenirs about me, and I have space enough to take my exercise in these rooms. Also, I can permit myself a certain degree of comfort till the end."

I was impressed, and delighted, by the princess's attitude, with its simple dignity and courage. It was not vain boasting on her part to talk as she did, for she had already gone through the disorders which had occurred from the Korniloff affair, when she had looked down out of her windows at the bloody struggle, which occurred on the Quai below; and she had also lived through the first revolutionary movement here and the two Bolshevik uprisings since. Her younger servitors were gone to the war long ago, only those over fifty were still about her, and of her friends

all had left or were leaving; yet she said, "I don't mind that especially. I can be read to, and take exercise, and I need not look out either at the Germans or at the rabble. If they come to me, it would probably be to kill me, and to smash everything here; and I would just as soon be killed as to see all my collections and my home destroyed, yet live on myself."

When I left her, late in the afternoon, she came with me through the great rooms, where so many treasures of art hung upon the walls, or stood about in their old places. "I've put away nothing, you see," said the princess. "No place is safe, really, and I want at least to enjoy it all, what time I can." And then she kissed me, and said affectionately, "Adieu, my niece, and thanks for coming. It touched me greatly that you thought of me. God bless and keep you and yours!" Her tiny figure stood more erect than usual at the top of her immense white marble stairs, and I thought of the fine blood she carried in her veins. As I looked up at her, it seemed to me her ancestors would be proud of her courage against the enemy and rabble alike. In the past, she and her husband had always shown the same spirit, and they had even dared to close their doors to all of the Imperial family, because Prince Paskévitch had disapproved of something the Emperor Alexander II had done. They had made an exception only in favor of the wife of Alexander III, the present Empress Mother, who was an intimate friend of Princess Paskévitch, and who had remained so; but no other Imperial guest had ever crossed this great lady's threshold, though she never spoke a word of criticism; and I had heard the facts not from her, but from the Grand Duchess Marie Pauvlovna.

Once hearing me speak of the Paskévitch collections, the Grand Duchess said, "I've never seen them. Imagine, I've never even been into her palace!" And at my surprised question, she continued, "My dear Joy, it is not because we do not accept; she has never deigned to invite any of us. We are punished for being related to my father-in-law, who once displeased the old prince, her husband; and the Dowager Empress is the only exception to the rule. She enjoys, I believe, very much her relations with the princess, and sometimes tells us of her friend."

Russia, always full of contradiction, had presented in the society of its capital for three reigns the amusing situation of an autocratic Emperor, who allowed the whole Imperial family, save one member, to be snubbed by one of his own aristocrats; allowing the latter to live in peace and plenty, in a great palace near the Imperial one, and to hold and keep his great place and rank. While the Sovereign invited constantly to court the old prince's relations, three Emperors had amiably smiled at the discomfiture of various Grand Dukes and Grand Duchesses, who were sighing to be invited to the Paskévitch fêtes! This to me was as much a puzzle, as it was that so many of the autocratic government's ministers should be self-made men, of the people yet invariably covered with honors, and well cared for, by their grateful Sovereigns. My own husband's ancestor, Spéransky, son of a village priest, had been made chancellor and count; and Witte, previously a railroad station-agent, had filled the same place in our time, receiving his titles from the hands of Nicholas II, and sent to represent Russia and the Emperor to sign the Portsmouth peace.

CHAPTER XVII

THE BOLSHEVIK UPRISING

Having accomplished all I had gone to do, I left Petrograd as planned and arrived safely in Kief with a large and varied assortment of baggage. So my bird had protected me and brought me luck again, but I carried off from the north such sad impressions that I hated to think of my visit to Petrograd! I had seen no serenity anywhere, save in the Paskévitch Palace, and in the princess's proud old face; and had found no optimism except in the heart of the brave American Ambassador. Each time I met him, I admired his energy and indomitable will to help Russia, and to believe in her powers, when to us she seemed done for. Nothing one could say gave him the least alarm, any more than threats against him personally inspired him with fear; and his embassy was a citadel of strong warm comfort to me, and to many others.

My husband had been very worried during my trip, feeling that the threatened railroad strike might easily catch me and keep me *en panne;* or that the Germans' arrival in Petrograd might cause a stampede from there, and make traveling altogether impossible.

As it was, the Germans decided to advance no farther than Pskof, and they left the capital to their spies and their subordinate agents (the Bolsheviki) for a time.

The provisionals still kept a semblance of power; and by remarkable feats of adroit politics and concessions, they held on another month. During this month, we in Kief lived the most retired life possible, except in what concerned my husband's professional work, and the ever-present salon group, who came and went, bringing, and gathering, bad news. One could not get away from the political and military situation, ever more tense and more strained, and Cantacuzène was frightfully harassed. To make matters more difficult, Oboroutcheff was sent to Denmark to inspect prison camps, and was replaced by a nonentity; so that Kirienko and my husband now carried their augmented duties as best they could.

Everyone was nervous, and the crowds in the streets became greater than ever. One had a feeling that the slightest spark would set fire to the whole situation. Michael no longer let me go out alone on foot; and after dark, it was admittedly dangerous to be on the streets. The French units were leaving, or trying to do so, as rapidly as possible. Many of our class were going to the Caucasus or the Crimea, saying the Germans would soon be in Kief; and the peasant committees, having taken over their estates anyhow (under Ukrainian encouragement), they had nothing to gain by remaining and themselves falling into enemy hands. Others of the nobility, deciding traveling was dangerous and difficult, did not join the exodus. These said quite frankly that when the Germans came, there would at least be law and order, which they preferred, at any price, to the eternal anxiety of the last few months; and to the present topsy-turvy conditions.

Most of us felt the need for expression, and the rumors which floated about were wildly exciting, and extremely wearing to nerves already racked. I was so sorry for all the sufferers, not excepting ourselves! We had horrid news now from Bouromka, and none at all from the other estates, and we were seriously concerned. We ordered the intendants and certain faithful house servants to bring to Kief what smaller objects they could, from the more valuable collections at Bouromka: ancient silver, the old snuff-boxes, the jewelry worn by various ancestresses, as well as a very rare and beautiful collection of old cameos, and the jewels of my mother-in-law and sister-in-law, which had been left in their safes at Bouromka. Finally, the necessary papers of identification, in case the estates should be confiscated and the château destroyed.

The bronzes, pictures, furniture and collections of china could not be handled or transported without attracting attention; and above all, it seemed important to avoid arousing suspicion, among the village committeemen. So these, and twenty thousand volumes in the library, some of them of infinite value (intrinsic and sentimental), all the family archives, and a cellar of rare vintages — many of which were more than a century old — remained to their fate.

Since the committee at Bouromka had been understudied with men from outside and the latter had mixed with our own people, there had been constant friction between the villagers and our intendants, and the latter lived in great fear of what was coming. The worst of these forebodings were soon realized. First, our cattle and horses were confiscated; a few days later the distillery was broken into and burned, and

the drunken crowd invaded our farm buildings, taking possession of the château stables also, with all their contents of state-carriages and harness. Then our house cellar was rifled, and the faithful servants were driven out back to the village, while the crowd captured the park and gardens, the orchards and espaliers, and rifled the mill and storehouses, destroying machinery, workshops, and so on. The château itself was still spared, though the strangers advised its burning; but the canny elders among our peasants said it would be a pity to do away with so good a palace; better let it stand and use it sometime. And so it stood for three or four months more, when it was given in prey to the flames, amid a frantic, drunken mob of what had once been our quiet peasantry!

With this news to disturb my husband, while he was trying to liquidate his mother's business affairs, and to dispose to the best advantage of her ready money, capital, and city property, so she would be enabled to tide over the crisis, and with all his work to keep Kief orderly, Cantacuzène's life was a real martyrdom. I scarcely moved now from our rooms, where I saw enough people to satisfy any desire I might have for sociability, and where I found occupation enough in some Red Cross work, preparing bandages for the hospital near-by, and in my books. I took the air in our garden, which being back of the house, was entirely protected from street excitements. During this time, housekeeping became a difficult art. The price of every necessity and luxury soared in a most preposterous manner. Toilet soap, which had been twenty kopecks a cake, reached three rubles and fifty kopecks; and there was no laundry soap at all.

Butter had gone from sixty kopecks to ten rubles a pound. Rice was seven rubles a pound, when obtainable. A blue serge, ordinarily about five rubles a yard, was anywhere from seventy to one hundred rubles now; and for a yard of white crêpe-de-chine, whose old price was four-fifty, I had recently paid forty-eight rubles! A ready-made dress worth about sixty rubles cost one thousand now!

We had reduced our meals to coffee and black bread with a little butter in the mornings; at lunch, two dishes, generally a stew of some kind, and the second course of potatoes, cabbage or tomatoes; while our supper consisted of one dish only, which was generally cold, and was prepared from the remains of lunch; with coffee, bread and a little honey as dessert. We had a large supply of honey brought in from Bouromka in the summer. We had collected provisions during a year and more past, and I counted there was coffee, sugar, and such things as oil, enough to last us a year. Also we had potatoes, cabbages and various dried vegetables to last, with care, through the whole winter. Most precious of all, was a bag of white flour, which we reserved for use in case of illness, and had divided up into small packages, which were hidden in the walls and woodwork and in various pieces of furniture. Everything was sold by card system, but almost never could the quantity allowed really be obtained. Sometimes, even after the servants had spent hours waiting in line before the shops, there was nothing to be had; and for our household, consisting of seventeen people, we could get only ten pounds or less of black bread each day, and frequently two or three days passed when none could be had.

Everything was divided up by our servitors in excellent good-humor. The cook showed himself truly a cordon-bleu, since he managed to make all our meals tempting, in spite of their sameness; and he prepared for the kitchen excellent thick peasant soups of milk, dried vegetables and pieces of cheap meats. Luckily, dairy products, fruits, green vegetables, and the native coarse cereals were still plentiful, but the outlook for the winter was very unpromising; and we foresaw food-riots, with the famine which must soon come upon this city through the disorder in transportation. There was lack of fuel too. We had put in our supply of wood in the summer, and we hoarded it with care, heating baths and stoves with utmost economy. We all took our tubs as nearly successively as possible, and the kitchen fire was reduced to what was necessary for one hot meal each day. Wood, in the old days twenty rubles for the "cubic-sagéne," cut and ready to burn, had climbed to fifty and sixty before the revolution; since then, we had paid four hundred rubles in the summer for the same measure, considering it a bargain; and now in October it had reached six and seven hundred! There was no coal at all, save for factories and government use. I was more afraid of our provisions being requisitioned than of any other danger; but our luck held, and when we left Kief, we passed on fuel and dried vegetables to our successors in the house, while we took my mother-in-law a royal present of our coffee, sugar, and so on. For this the family was immensely grateful, as they had not believed in the dramatic conditions until quite recently; and they consequently had very few stores to fall back upon.

When people met now in Kief, there were only two subjects discussed with any real interest; first and foremost came that of our daily food, and the small economies and arrangements to save it; and secondly, of course, we talked of politics. Everyone seemed thin, and people hesitated to accept an invitation to stay and eat a meal in the old informal Russian manner. One felt indiscreet also in accepting a candle or a scrap of ribbon, while a jar of jam or a little sugar was a serious gift, and represented a warm demonstration of generous friendship. Few had as much as we, for somehow we had long ago realized the threatened misery; and we had had money at hand to buy and space to store our purchases; but, nevertheless, even we felt very poor and gloomy, and the days dragged on in constant fear of terrible things, about which we avoided talking.

And thus we reached the twenty-fifth of October, Russian style — November seventh — when we received the first news of the great Bolshevik uprising in the capital; the attack on the Winter Palace, Kerensky's flight and the complete eclipse or arrest of the remainder of the provisional-government! Chaos evidently in Petrograd; and then complete silence, with the telegraphic, postal and press communications all cut off!

In Kief there was naturally an instantaneous reflection of the drama in the north. At the first signs of uprising, Michael put the Cuirassiers in charge of the arsenal and the railroad station; while young cadets from the two military schools for future officers were used to garrison the staff building, telephone, water and electric stations; and when the Bolsheviki

began disorders in the neighborhood of their own quarters (at the Imperial palace) these were attacked by the cadets and some Cossacks, and in three days two battles were fought about the palace and in its gardens, while the place passed from hand to hand. The cadets found large quantities of provisions which had been gathered and hidden by the soviet's men for their own use, and the poor building itself was frightfully ill-treated — by our men, the soviets claimed, while ours insisted it was the hooligans themselves who were guilty. . . . At any rate the place was sacked, and all documents of the passport-department were lost. On November seventh were the first demonstrations in the factory districts, and in some outer streets of Kief. Cantacuzène then used his strongest and only reliable troops, as I have said, and putting some Cossacks in the streets as patrols, since there were no police, he thought he could still keep the town quiet until news came through from the capital. If a triumph for the government was reported, all might be well.

Thursday and Friday there were no riots, only processions, meetings, and a general feverishness; and factory strikes out of town. Then the trams stopped; and Friday night mob-crowds began to form, making threats of attack on the staff buildings, which necessitated a strong defensive force quartered there. I watched the arrival of this, which consisted of the young cadets. It was dark, and their heavy tramp attracted me to the window towards one in the morning. A first group entered, and disappeared in the buildings, occupying the courts back of the offices; then another large unit arrived, and the boys spread

themselves out all over our sidewalk and street, lighting their camp-fires, stacking muskets, and settling for the night. They looked immensely spick and span, and were evidently delighted with their sudden call to duty; and gay young laughter and talk floated in to us through our open windows. To my expressions of regret my husband answered that such boys must do this kind of work now, as he hadn't enough Cuirassiers to go round. He had put the latter in the hardest places; and these little chaps liked the excitement much better than studying their lessons. Their ages ran from seventeen to twenty; but they felt they were doing men's heavy work. And indeed, they might have it to do. I could see Cantacuzène didn't like using them much better than I did. Small cannon and quick-firing guns were established where they could sweep the street entrances. Our block was all there was of the "Bankovia," which ran into other streets at right angles on each of its ends, where a building blocked the vista. Our defensive cannon, if fired, would therefore send shell through the rabble and squarely into the houses beyond. It struck me the people living in them might be frightened if they were watching our preparations; while, on the other hand, our own house, surrounded with soldiers, and up against the staff-building, would be the objective of the attackers; and if anything happened really we were promised a hot and exciting time.

My husband spoke little, but he looked white and anxious. He spent most of his days and nights at the staff, where Kirienko was holding a perpetual session of the impromptu commission formed to decide questions with reference to local defense, and the city

government's action. Kirienko was remarkable in the situation, cool, optimistic, encouraging, making quick and responsible decisions, receiving and haranguing people and deputations who appeared, playing poker with Fate truly; and with extraordinary bluffs winning many points, and holding on desperately, in the hope that each hour might bring news from Petrograd.

As time passed, and still nothing came from the capital, Michael saw his troops wearing out; there were not enough to change them off, with his men so scattered about. More being needed at new places also, urgent telegrams were sent, and two regiments of Czecho-Slovaks were brought from points where they were in reserve back of the firing lines. These arrived on Sunday afternoon, and were a great relief to the commander, who hoped he was getting reliable help, as he reviewed them in front of the staff headquarters with Kirienko. The city that afternoon was fairly quiet, save for meetings in the business quarters, while about us was what looked like a very lively camp. The cadets, who had been on duty for two days, were relieved at once by the newcomers, and these cooked their evening meal on our sidewalk, and seemed to be businesslike and comfortable. The Cuirassiers were still at the arsenal and the station, and my husband left them in charge of these two posts. Ever so many people came to see us at all hours to look from our windows at what was going on. My brother-in-law chose this unhappy moment to arrive in Kief from the Crimea on business. He had started without hearing news of the uprisings. He put up at a friend's nearby, and took his meals with us, while

Prince and Princess Kourakine, who had just come also — he from the front and she from her country place — met in Kief for a few days, and stayed with us.

Of course the whole town was vastly excited. There was some distant shooting in outlying districts, but the center of Kief was still quiet. There was no news as yet from Petrograd. We began to fear a reign-of-terror was really inaugurated there, and that the mob had seized the government. Cantacuzène's strain reacted on me somewhat, and I never supposed days could be so long and so wearing as these were.

Kirienko, in the absence of orders from the capital, had decided to act at once on his own initiative. On Monday morning he had called together a commission of government men, and had then formally invited the Ukrainian rada and the soviets of workmen and soldiers to send deputies. These should discuss the situation with him, and help take measures to insure the tranquillity of our city and the safety of its inhabitants. The soviets made no reply at all to Kirienko's invitation; the rada sent representatives. After long wrangling, these Ukrainians came to an understanding with the central government party. They would take over certain administrative departments, principally in connection with the relations between peasants and proprietors, and also certain lines of government control in town. For this gain in power, they, in exchange, would police the whole province, keeping law and order in the rural districts; also they would help to police Kief now, and prevent a Bolshevik uprising. Their deputies showed themselves polite enough, and plausible, so, though Kirienko as well as my husband, had

never liked or trusted them, the commissioner came to terms in this emergency. He even felt it might be a great advantage, politically, to have the Ukrainians separated from the Bolsheviki, and to keep the former, at least, our allies in a crisis.

When it came to settling where the different military units should be stationed, the Ukrainians claimed "as a compliment" that their national soldiers should receive certain honorary posts in the city; among others, they wished to guard the arsenal. Cantacuzène protested violently at so much being put into the hands of uncertain friends; but the rada made it the price of its coöperation, and Kirienko thought our party could not risk losing the Ukrainian help. The concession was made them, and my husband was in despair over it. Before the deputation left the staff office that evening, their leader had signed a formal treaty with Kirienko, accepting in the rada's name an alliance, offensive and defensive, with the provisional central government. From now on these two parties were to act together, and their united efforts, it was hoped, would quiet and intimidate the Bolsheviki, and give a respite from the strain of the last four days.

During the discussions a deputation of invalided officers had waited on Kirienko at the staff. At their head was a most exceptional personage: a Jewish officer, risen from the ranks, decorated with the St. George's Cross, and discharged from the army because of four wounds, which had completely incapacitated him. These men offered the services of their whole group (a large association in Kief), saying they were ready to carry guns, or be useful in any possible man-

ner. Kirienko declined, however, answering that they had already done their duty, and would not make enough difference in our strength to warrant his putting them in the terrible situation where they would find themselves afterwards, if the provisional's cause should be lost.

That night, Monday, we went to bed, feeling we might sleep tranquilly, and though the soldiers were still established in our street, we were secure in the belief of their departure on the morrow. The servants brought me some annoying rumors, gathered among their acquaintances, as to the Czecho-Slovak soldiers, who said openly they were willing to fight side-by-side with the Russians, so long as this was against Germany and Austria, but that they did not care what party reigned in Kief, and would not take part in any shooting against either Ukrainians or Bolsheviki. Also the Ukrainian soldiers seemed, according to reports from the same sources, to be fraternizing on the street with the Bolsheviki. We tried not to believe all this, but it turned out to be only too true, for early next morning we were awakened by firing all about us. Poor Michael could not dress fast enough to reach the staff, where he remained some time, while we waited anxiously for news. He had found everything there in mad confussion. Kirienko sent at once for the rada leader, who came in haste, and in answer to his accusations explained with many phrases that, "Yesterday he had signed with the provisional government what *he considered a temporary* agreement, while last evening the soviets had sent him to the rada-meeting a deputation asking for his coöperation. They offered the Ukrainians such

advantages, in case of acceptance, that at the general desire of all their people, the rada and ministry (himself at its head) felt obliged to tie themselves definitely to the Bolsheviki. If the people's party came into power now, the Ukrainians would be given the entire administration of the provinces round about Kief; consequently, in their nationalist interests, he had become the ally of this people's party, the Bolsheviki." Kirienko protested, threatened, bluffed; but he could do nothing. The shooting all over town was growing violent. The Ukrainians and Bolsheviki were together, and the commissioner stood alone without even the background of Petrograd to uphold his authority; and with no troops to rely on but the tired handful of Cuirassiers, and the little cadets. As the rada's representatives departed, reports began to come in, giving dramatic impressions of our group's desperate condition. At the aviation camp in one suburb the soldiers had mutinied, had killed or wounded several of their officers, while the remainder of the latter had fled, after removing the magnetos from their airplanes, so these could not be used by the soldiers for bombing the city. The men of the artillery batteries had behaved in the same way, only the officers there were not able to put the heavy guns beyond possibility of use. Every now and then, a shot fell into the center of the city, causing great havoc and excitement. We still had water, electricity and telephone service; but it was a question of how long this would last. The Cuirassiers kept the railroad station, and the little cadets returned to the staff-buildings while the firing grew more violent all through that day, and the following night.

Wednesday morning Kirienko was still at the staff. Cantacuzène also, but there was nothing any one could do now, and the city was in an uproar. Officers were being shot on sight anywhere, bombs were exploding, bullets whizzed through the air, and broke windows or embedded themselves in walls. We felt vastly alarmed, especially as in our neighborhood several houses were sacked, hundreds of people arrested, and from time to time it was reported that the mob of Bolsheviki were marching in our direction to attack the staff buildings. If this happened, it was merely a question of how long the boy cadets could hold out, before there would be a general fire and massacre on the captured premises.

By the afternoon the Ukrainians demanded that for the general "safety and protection of the revolution" troops of the provisional government retire from Kief and be disbanded, and that the cadets return immediately to their schools, where they were to be considered prisoners of war. Kirienko was obliged to hear the orders given to that effect. It was quite evident that in Kief the reign of the provisionals was over, and that the power was in the hands of the mob. My husband indignant, with his soldiers dispersed and banished from the city, could do nothing now but hand in his resignation. This he did. He was consequently without any command; and that afternoon we talked of what we should plan further in case we got out alive from this hornet's nest. We decided to go first to the Crimea for a rest.

Since noon, the shooting had been steadily augmenting. A quick-firing gun had been installed on

our roof, besides all those lined up below our windows, and our street was waiting for the attack. I knew Michael would be doomed, as soon as the Ukrainians took over the power, since all through the summer he had bent his best energies to fighting their propaganda and revenge would seem very sweet to them. We were both very tired; and he especially was terribly worn by his work. His nerves were stretched to the limit, and his wound was giving him constant pain; so a change of air and scene, if possible, seemed to recommend itself. We sat talking of all this, saying also that the Bolsheviki and Ukrainians had shown their cards at last by joining forces, and had proved their common enemy-origin. Two or three friends were present, and shooting still accompanied our conversation as it grew late.

Suddenly Colonel Sakhnowsky, then commander of the Cuirassiers, was announced, and saying he must speak with Cantacuzène on urgent matters, he was received in the latter's workroom. When my husband returned he said to me without preamble, " Can you leave the house in ten minutes? " I answered I could; whereupon he added, " Sakhnowsky has just come from the staff. He says the crowd in power have already shot the commander of the garrison's infantry, and are going to arrest any Cuirassier officers left in the town, and that I am being looked for, to be judged and executed. Kirienko is also condemned, and has disappeared, having fled. Sakhnowsky wants me either to go out and stay in the Cuirassiers' temporary camp outside town, or to hide in town, for the first hours of the enemy's triumph. I've decided

to do the latter, as at least I won't be exposing the regiment to trouble or attack. We can spend the night at the hotel, if you like. There is a room already engaged there." Taking a small bag, into which I put a few valuable papers, with some of my jewels and money which were in the house, I threw on a cloak and my furs and hat. The servants meantime had opened a trunk containing my husband's civilian clothes, and he had made a hurried change. Kourakine and all the men in the house helped, and Michael was dressed by the time I had made a round of our rooms, putting out of sight a few ornaments and souvenirs which were lying about, and which I prized. I hoped to have them escape notice, in case our rooms were visited by any soldiers in our absence. It wasn't difficult to hide things, since I knew the servants' discretion was reliable, devoted and intelligent. I gave Élène and Davidka orders to bring us later, in paper bundles, what clothes and food we needed, to the hotel. The tale they agreed to tell, if officials asked for Cantacuzène, was that we had left Kief that morning, and had gone by the noon train, to return in a few days. We counted on Kourakine for telling the story, and to handle any situation which might unexpectedly rise. Our chief difficulty, we knew, would be geting out of the house, through the lines of troops encamped on our doorstep and the sidewalk, and also along the streets between us and the hotel. Now, all these troops were Ukrainians, who might know my husband's face dangerously well. Luckily it was cold and almost dark, and he was in civilian clothes, which he had never before worn in Kief. He put on a heavy traveling ulster and a soft

felt hat, and threw his traveling scarf about his neck, covering chin and beard. Under his cloak he took the precaution of carrying his revolver and sword. I felt satisfied that in this disguise Michael was quite unrecognizable. Pulling my own furs up high, and taking the small bag of valuables in one hand, I covered it with my big muff. The extravagance of my muffs had often been laughed at, but that night I was grateful for this one's size and protection. I also had my revolver loaded, and off the safe, in my hand, inside the muff.

We made our adieus to our visitors and servants in the hall, then had all the lights put out, so the front door's opening would attract less attention from outside. Kourakine unbarricaded the door, and held it open enough for Cantacuzène to slip out. I followed him, and it closed behind me again, very quietly. I admit my heart beat hard, and I was wet with perspiration, in spite of the cold air, as we threaded our way sauntering across the street, and along the sidewalk of the other side, towards the corner. Here stood a sentinel, with cocked gun; but fortunately for us, he was of the new régime variety; and instead of attending to his business and challenging us, he chattered on, smoking with some comrades, who were having dinner; and we slunk by slowly behind him, till we reached the remnants of a barricade, which stretched in disorderly heaps across the street. Once past this, I breathed more freely, and my husband spoke, "Now hurry! Shall I take the bag? Here it seems general traffic is allowed, and I imagine we are all right!" I insisted on keeping the bag, so he could the better hold and hide his side-arms. Our walk became as

rapid as possible, and for this the occasional bullets flying about, seemed reason enough. We passed a general with his head down, going at a quick pace. It was my brother-in-law, Niroth. "Théo," I said, low. He raised his eyes. "Why, Joy, what on earth? And Misha, too, in this lovely costume! Where are you two going? To a masquerade?"

Cantacuzène said, "Hush," and then, "Come with us"; and Théo turned, and kept us company, while we told him in a few words of our experiences since luncheon time, which seemed ages ago. As we reached the next street, we met a cab, and with a good-by to Théo, who promised to report at home our favorable progress through the danger zone and to send us some dinner soon, we jumped into the vehicle and drove on to the hotel. There the porter, whom we knew by having often dined at his restaurant in gayer days, nearly fell over when he saw us and recognized Cantacuzène. He took us to a room on the top floor, which my husband had kept for months in his name, using it for any officer or business man whom he wished to detain in town. It was a piece of luck to have it now, as the house was crowded. Fortunately, as we reached our floor, we heard that the soldiers of the Ukrainian Government had just finished inspecting there, and had gone down below, looking for arms, examining people's passports, and confiscating valuables. I felt quite comfortably safe as I took off my cloak and hid our revolvers.

The room was desperately dirty, and upsidedown, with beds unmade, soiled water standing in washstand bowls, and all the furniture pushed about, as if by an earthquake. Our windows looked out on a

courtyard, so we were safe from stray shots or attack. One could hear, however, from the streets the firing of rifles and machine guns, and the occasional deep explosion of hand-grenades or bombs. I had no particular desire to live through more excitement than I was forced to; but my husband, who so far had spent all these busy days in his office, was keen to be free, and to see things from the spectator's point of view. He believed his disguise sufficient to protect him; and it seemed easier for him to move about, than to sit still, so I didn't even protest at his going down again into the big main street. His absence gave me time to make our room more habitable. It was an easy thing to empty the waste-water buckets, and bring fresh from a faucet in the hallway near by; also to push the furniture into more comfortable places; but the beds offered a graver problem. I rang bells without result, till some one I met in the hall told me all the servants in the hotel were on strike, "for no other reason, than that they wanted to take part in the fun on the streets." They had been gone four or five days, all save the old door porter, and no one could eat on the premises, or even have a bath; while every guest cleaned his own room, or left it uncleaned. Finally, with much energetic search I discovered the apartment of the hotel director, and I had a talk with his wife. After some discussion she kindly consented to bring me sheets and towels from her own personal store. "But only this once, lady, as the washwomen also are on strike; and they will give me no more." She and I opened windows and dusted, and having aired the beds, we made them up freshly. I began to feel very impatient for the promised supper; and

when about nine o'clock Davidka and Élène appeared, I was delighted with cold ham and hard-boiled eggs, and various other picnic dishes Mme. Ivanoff had sent. Best of all seemed a bottle of hot coffee and a tiny flask of old brandy for Cantacuzène. Also the servants brought necessary linen and clothes for the morrow, and our dressing cases. They had braved the street-shooting to bring us all this, and they reported it was quiet at home, when they had left; though some soldiers had called asking for Cantacuzène; but after a conversation with Prince Kourakine and Count Niroth these had departed, not even inspecting the house.

My husband returned, and we dined quite gayly. I was very pleased, because he said my nerves were as good as his own in the emergency, or better; and we laughed over my Faberger bird, which had again brought us luck. We spent a short, quiet evening in our high-perched room, and slept, exhausted and relieved, until in the morning Davidka and Élène arrived with coffee and hot toast from home. They said the late evening had been very exciting on the Bankovaia. There had been a lot of violent firing, and our house-party, with the servants, had taken refuge, and spent most of their time in a back-corridor, where, as there were no windows, they felt protected from bullets. The lower city, where we were now, had also seen some final fights, and many of the poor cadets had been hunted down, all over town, and wounded or killed. The Bolsheviki, this morning, had knuckled down to the rada, and the latter was now in command, and busy organizing things. The day was quiet and sunny, and the city appeared to be peaceful though

much dilapidated. Kief looked as if it were the worse for some monster celebration, and all the hospitals were overflowing. Street crowds were visiting the sights, standing before the walls where great holes had been made by projectiles from cannons, also where the streets were torn up, or blocked by barricades. On every side windows were smashed, or cracked, and pierced with bullet holes. Each man was telling the story of his own particular experiences, while the public looked about with the same holiday air always so characteristic of Kief.

Cantacuzène started out to get his discharge papers, promised him by division-headquarters at noon, and I went to do some shopping. I found shops and banks open, and, as in July in Petrograd, I had the impression of Russia's wonderful intelligence in letting by-gones be by-gones. If it hadn't been for broken windows and injured buildings and for my husband's civilian clothes, I should have been tempted to think I had dreamed all the events of the last thirty-six hours. In the afternoon Cantacuzène, no longer belonging to the Russian army, and with his papers in order, took me back to our house, and we surprised our guests by appearing in time to dine with them. Kourakine and Théo were very jealous, they said, of our new, complete liberty. No one was allowed to resign now, and it was only Cantacuzène's blessing in disguise (his wound) which brought him this luck. We decided to go south immediately, on the following Saturday if we could get off, and to take Mme. Ivanoff with us. Then, if it was possible, to go beyond the frontier soon. We knew the time had come at last to join our children, and I thanked Heaven they were safe, and

away from all we had gone through, or might still have ahead. Their presence now would have been a terrible complication, if not actually a danger to our lives; and their own would have been far from safe.

All the party teased me very much, when they found I had carried my Faberger owl from home to the hotel the night before, and back again; and all attributed our miraculous escape to the tiny stone bird of wisdom. Kourakine gave me a pair of charming jade plaques inlaid with old beaten gold and wee rubies, as a "decoration for my action under fire." He said he should have considered anyone crazy, who had told him a year previously, he should ever be under fire with me.

On Friday all our party scattered. Princess Kourakine and my brother-in-law left for the Crimea, to winter there; while Kourakine returned to the front "for a little rest, after his strenuous vacation." Poor Niroth was sorely disappointed, having come to Kief for the annual sale of wood from his estates. He had been unable to transact any business, and now he was leaving, without even knowing if his estates were still his. He found he could not communicate in any way with his intendants, and he heard all the country round his "Levkovo" was up in the air.

CHAPTER XVIII

OUR ESCAPE FROM KIEF

Trains were running again, and there was news of Petrograd at last. It was announced that the Bolsheviki had been entirely successful there, and had taken over the government, while the provisional ministers were shut up in the fortress — all but Kerensky, who had fled in the very beginning of the trouble. The Winter Palace had been stormed, and taken, after a brave defense by the woman's Battalion-of-Death, which had lost half its effectives in killed and wounded. All the other troops, of course, turned Bolsheviki, and everywhere in the capital there had been a high carnival of bloodshed and riots, assassinations and arrests — a page of the March performance, greatly exaggerated. As far as we were concerned, this meant definitely an end of my husband's work; and we must be only too thankful to be among the few who might perhaps escape further danger and misery. All congratulated us, and expressed relief that my husband was now leaving the place he had so valiantly defended from the Ukrainian propaganda. He was told he ought to go as quickly as possible, for surely when the new administrators were once in the saddle, they would think of him among their first political victims.

Packing began. I fancied I had brought nothing to

Kief, but as the servants piled things up, this seemed far from the case; and finally I saw ten large trunks prepared, impossible to drag with us under present conditions, and which we decided to leave to the care of some sure friends: those who were sub-letting our house for the rest of the contract. Six smaller trunks, with valuables and real necessities, we meant to carry on our trip; besides these we seemed to have much hand baggage, as well as a huge basket of provisions for the journey. Each one of our acquaintances, who came to see us before the day of separation, brought some little gift from slender stores — a glass of preserves, a few biscuits, or some sliced ham.

Davidka and Élène, indignant with the fate that had overtaken us, but glad now on their own account to abandon Kief, arranged everything with evident desire to please. We had removed Davidka's Cuirassier-epaulets, when the regiment was sent away, so he would not be ill-treated on the street, by his Ukrainian "comrades."

He had varied his career to fit in with my husband's. Beginning the war as a Chevalier Guard he had, during the winter of 1914–15, gone through a terrible illness, caught at the front, and had obtained a complete discharge from the service. He refused this in order to stay with his master. He had kept his papers, however, in case he chose to use them some day, and had joined my husband at the Grand Duke's staff. Later, risking a relapse, he returned to the front with Cantacuzène when the latter was named commander of the Cuirassiers. At first Davidka had looked down on the new regiment, and spoke always of "the Cuirassiers," and "we Chevaliers Guards," though he had

dutifully allowed himself to be transferred, and wore their yellow shoulder-straps. My husband had scolded him, telling him his slighting manner was misplaced, and that if he would take the pains to learn their history, he would find his new regiment as splendid as any in the guards or the army. Davidka took this advice to heart, and finally became most disdainful of the old unit, and intensely proud of the new, which he rather felt himself to be commanding. He was especially delighted with Cantacuzène's situation in Kief, and he took his own position there very seriously. He enjoyed the city life, and the brigade made him feel important. It was all much easier for him than the trenches had been, especially with the halo of the aristocratic Cuirassiers surrounding him through the summer, with the prestige of their past service under fire, and their present actual discipline. No one had really been of greater service to my husband. Intimate with the soldier-committee members, Davidka showed himself discreet and adroit, and on all occasions he instinctively knew what to say. His devotion made him entirely dependable as a confidential messenger, while his resourcefulness was admirable. We had named him "the prime minister" and many a time he reported to my husband a feeling or a speech of his soldier group, in time for events to be directed or prevented, when it would have been difficult to act after one knew of the complication officially.

Now the man felt dethroned. He asked Cantacuzène to take him south first, and then to America; but my husband refused, saying, "What about your service?" "But the regiment is to be disbanded, and anyhow, your Highness, I can leave; for I have dis-

charge papers, just like your own, and can use them; and I won't serve now." But my husband still refused; and then the man tried me. He fussed silently about the room, picking up and putting down things till I spoke to him. "I hear you are leaving the service, Davidka." "Yes, your Highness, I would much like to go to America." "But how can you, with a wife and children at Bouromka, and disorders there? You ought to go home to the village, where your interests are." "My wife has her family, Highness, and I always served the château and our Prince. I don't want to be mixed in those troubles, and I very much wish to go to America, your Highness; and the Prince says no." And he looked at me with great trouble in his intelligent eyes. "Davidka, we can't take you so far from your family. You must see that, and understand; but if you don't want to go back to the village, we shall try and arrange to put you with Count Niroth in the Crimea." And with this he was content, since he might remain with us till we left Petrograd.

Several members of the Cuirassiers' soldier committee came to see Cantacuzène. They expressed the nicest sentiments of devotion, and they said how glad they were, he was going away in peace, and how they wished him well. If they were ever again called upon to fight, they would elect him for their division commander, and so on. The Cuirassiers were indignant and very sad to be ordered out of the city, and to see their regiment disbanded. Most of them were scattering, returning to their villages; some were entering other military groups; and one set had joined a squadron of mounted police, which the Ukrainians were

enrolling for the city of Kief. They were to have the left-over uniforms of the old-régime gendarmes, were promised good pay, and their service would begin at once. "Your Highness," said one of these men with reference to the recent changes, "we have been told so many different things in these eight months of revolution that now we do not know what or whom to believe, and we grow even to doubt ourselves!" A state of mind it was easy to understand, when one thought how these peasants and soldiers had been plunged, after centuries of dark, vague gropings, into the seething caldron of the revolution, with its glare of promises and theories, always false and unfulfilled. The best of them made a pathetic group, and it looked as if they would be forced to join the Bolsheviki or go down. Their ex-commander was pleased with their attitude and congratulated them; and they parted with mutual good wishes. His old officers, too, lingered about Michael and rejoiced in his history, with a sentiment all the more beautiful, since the law allowed them no such possibility, and they must remain in Russia in reserve, though they were put out of active service.

My husband had many last talks with friends. One interview was hot and painful; it was with General Skoropadsky, an old comrade of Chevaliers Guard days. Since that period Skoropadsky's reputation for intrigues had made him unpopular, though his bravery and military capacity had pushed him forward successfully enough during the war years. He came now to Cantacuzène and told him that being himself one of the largest proprietors of land in the Ukraine provinces, and having much interest in keeping the peace

there, he had decided to join the "national" movement, and he was soon to be elected commander of the Ukrainian army. My husband protested violently, saying if he did this, Skoropadsky would be playing into the enemy's hands. And the latter answered he fully knew that, but considered the only hope for law and order now, was through the Austrian or German rule, and that he meant to remain in Kief, at first as a Ukrainian, then even under the Germans if they came, helping to establish some sort of stable government, and upholding the enemy's discipline if need be. He said he cared nothing now for nationality, and saw no good in giving any preference to a sentiment of patriotism, when it only represented such chaos as ours did in the present. The sensible view of what was good for Little Russia, our people and class, was his, he said. After some further discussion, wherein Cantacuzène defended a broader form of patriotism, they parted with grave disappointment in each other.

There were a few of the proprietor class and of the great industrials at Kief who, after the fall of the provisional government, said they had no hope of safety or tranquillity now, save through German occupation; but I imagine it was only a momentary feeling, which none followed up by action, except Skoropadsky, who really did accept the position offered him, and carried out his policy to the end. I read the other day that under Von Eichorn's dictatorship, General Skoropadsky was still commander of the troops at Kief, and then came news of his murder by a Russian.

Everyone was naturally heartbroken, over what meant ruin to the whole nation, and a complete loss of all we held dear — our traditions, fortunes, homes,

and in many cases our lives. Nothing remained to us now; but though a few were furious and hysterical, most people were merely deeply depressed among our class in Kief, and I hated to abandon the city.

Saturday, suspecting the difficulties ahead, we went to the station at four P. M. to get places in our train for the south, which was to leave at eight-thirty. The station master was an adherent of my husband's, having had much to do with him, because of the guard of Cuirassiers, who had worked all summer on the station premises, and with whom Biron had been greatly pleased. He, therefore, invited Mme. Ivanoff and me into his private office, and kept us there, out of the crowd and in comparative comfort and cleanliness, for our four hours' wait. We watched the vast crowds from the window of this retreat, which overlooked the railroad platform; and we saw thousands of men, women and hideously dirty soldiers, with enormous packs of clothes, bedding and provisions, eating, sleeping, packing, dressing, all over the place, until they looked like refugees encamped.

We saw trains come in, and their contents of weary, worn humanity empty themselves out of the cars, through windows as well as doors, while waiting mobs surged about in huge waves. No sooner was one set of occupants out of them, than the cars were assaulted and taken by storm, with shouts, screams, lamentations, oaths and blows, crashing of glass and creaking and breaking of wood. The compartments and corridors were at once re-filled to overflowing, and on the roofs, platforms and steps, khaki-clad soldiers clung, like flies. Once they were placed, they all settled down philosophically to the discomforts of trav-

eling, and they unpacked provisions, quite ready to divide these with any chance neighbor. Officials were powerless to handle the situation, and I could see how much the Cuirassiers' large fists were missed. After a time Michael decided it would be impossible for us to fight for places against such odds, and he asked Biron (the station master) to allow us to go down into the car-yards, and get our car there, where we would wait till the train started. Biron consented, and a messenger was sent to find out about places, for there were no possibilities of engaging any now, and it must be always first come first served. When the man returned, his report was that the cars down there were already packed by hundreds of other people, who had had our idea and used it, without asking Biron's permission; and that there were not only no places left, but not even a pin could find space. So we gave up the start for that day, and our party returned to spend the night at home, greatly surprising the servants, who had remained in the house. Next day we would try our luck again. Mme. Ivanoff was terribly depressed, and most agitated over the dangers of a trip of three days under such conditions. Cantacuzène was greatly annoyed and worried, and I was more than ever determined that at whatever cost, we must go on the morrow and not defer our trip again, even by one day.

The station master had told me much of his history, during the hours I sat near his desk; and had said first of all he was delighted to meet an American, because he had heard much of my native land, having a brother settled there, and grown rich. He swore he would see to it, if we came to-morrow at two in the

afternoon, we should somehow have room to leave that evening. He then expatiated on what was going on all over Russia; told me there were hundreds of cars broken down, standing in the yard at Kief, which no workman could be persuaded to mend, thanks to the intrigues of the committees; that free fights were in order now all along the road, and that twice in the last few days (since the Cuirassiers had left) he had been obliged to draw his revolver to defend himself here in the station! All our rolling stock was rapidly wearing out, and new could not be obtained from anywhere, nor made at home. He said it was only a matter of weeks, when there would be a general strike of the road's employees, who were having constant trouble, and were even being wounded and killed on certain lines by the traveling soldiers; the latter wishing to dictate, and to have the trains run to suit themselves. On the other hand, the railroad men, though seemingly martyrs to the cause, were daily demanding raising of their wages, and would not work properly, or obey orders. As he painted it, the picture of Russia's present condition was less tragic, however, than that of our future. I wondered the man could be anything but a raving maniac in such surroundings; yet he seemed calm and cool, and even found time to smile, and be a little ironical. He was neatly shaved, and wore a smart, clean uniform.

I heard from my husband that Biron was considered one of the best men in his branch of the service in all Russia; and that he had remained at his post from pure patriotism through all these dreadful months; that he had said he would remain on even now, which probably meant he would find his end in some riot im-

possible to quell. The man was a fine, strong type. When later I asked what he thought of Russia he said, "For the country finally, I believe in a great future, which we who stay here now, won't live to see, Princess. First, we'll have the Germans here, and they will whip us, which is what we seem to need, to learn our lesson. Afterwards, it will be all right, and we shall progress; but you do well to go to America for a time. It is better to choose another republic than ours just now, and anything is better than this." He waved towards the window. "I would go, too, and visit my brother if I could, but I can't; and now it is too late even to send the wife and children; so we are going to try to weather the storm here."

When we went home that night we had had some supper and slept in doleful, dismantled rooms. I felt as if our journey had already begun, so acutely were the sights at the station impressed upon my mind. Mme. Ivanoff's maid "laid out the cards"; and the latter foretold that they would not take the long trip on which we were going. This discouraged the woman's little old mistress immensely, who, adding this prophecy to what she remembered having looked at through Biron's window during the afternoon, decided she was doomed to die on the trip, crushed in the mob.

However, after a bath and breakfast next morning we were all less blue, except Cantacuzène, who had not yet traveled since revolutionary times, and who had been horrified by his observations of the day before. I was resigned, as I had made one or two trips in almost the same conditions, and I knew that owing to the national good-nature, our plan could be carried

through, though it certainly looked unpromising. On our way to the depot, we were obliged to cross the main street of Kief, and there we found just passing, a public funeral of some of the victims — Ukrainians and Bolsheviki — of the past week's disorders. Masses of excited people packed the sidewalks and the side streets for a considerable distance back, looking on. We were in my husband's auto for the last time; but he himself in civilian clothes, and the chauffeur and Davidka minus their epaulets were not compromising. As the hearses finished passing, and only political deputations made up the procession, we noticed our smart machine was attracting attention and hostile glances from the onlookers. Luckily, just then our chauffeur saw in the crowd two mounted gendarmes, and saying to my husband, "Those may be some of ours, Highness, and perhaps they would help us through," he begged to send Davidka to investigate. Cantacuzène consented, and within a moment, both gendarmes turned, looked, and gave us a broad grin, but no salutes, not wishing to give us away. They appreciated our delicate position, and knew probably if the crowd recognized their ex-commander, our car would be smashed to bits, and we should not live to tell the tale. Davidka returned quietly, and climbed into his place. "It is possible, they say. Immediately," he remarked.

Then our chauffeur started his machine. A break in the procession occurred, and the two gendarmes drew closer to one another, and spoke to the crowd between themselves and us. "Travelers," they said. "They must get through to the train. Make room." The crowd amiably, and without interest in us, parted;

and we slid up behind the two gendarmes. They then moved forward slowly, dividing the mob in two, and the latter stared at us in silence as we passed. I saw my husband feel his revolver, but he made no remark, and I was glad he was in the middle of the backseat, and not driving, as of old. It made him less noticeable. We crossed safely between two of the deputations taking part in the march; and then we pushed on behind our guard, into the audience on the opposite side street. There stood another Cuirassier, camouflaged as a gendarme. He saw us, recognized his regimental motor and his old commander, and he silently saluted, with a pleased look on his face. We reached the free street a moment after, and left the danger behind, and we all of us sighed at once from sheer relief. Mme. Ivanoff wiped her eyes. The poor little old lady was dreadfully upset; but she made no trouble. Cantacuzène now thanked our Cuirassier saviors; and they with broad grins, answered in voices, gay and with the fashion of ancient days, "Your health, Highness! You are very welcome!" After that, we sped on through quieter streets, and reached the station safely.

Biron had planned our capture of a compartment, and had sent two sturdy agents to meet the train on its way north, at a station outside Kief. There they were to get on, and when the passengers left the cars in Kief, they were to seize and hold a compartment, till we could pile in. We, on our side, were to do this immediately the train came in from the Crimea, and before it even went to the yards to be cleaned up. Thus from two-thirty until nearly nine P. M. we would sit in our car, and hold our places against all comers,

and we were quite willing to do this, in order to have them. We had engaged an extra porter from the hotel, to help Davidka, and Mme. Ivanoff's manservant to put us in; with two station baggagemen, who also came along, we felt we were a strong party. Yet, even so, my husband was afraid we shouldn't be able to succeed in our attack. I was anxious for him as he looked dreadfully ill and worn; and he was suffering greatly from his wound, with constant dizziness and pain. It really seemed unfair he should have the acute discomfort of this trip, on top of the troubles he had already faced. He drew some consolation, however, from the fact that I had made a trip almost as bad in the summer, over this same road; and he decided, after a suggestion of giving it up in despair, that as we must get away sometime, it would probably be easier now than later on. Besides, since other people traveled daily by this route, there was no real reason why we might not succeed as well as they.

The amazing thing to me, was that everyone in the station did not murder everyone else. No one seemed to suffer more than the dose of absolutely necessary misery to get through; and I counted as always on the excellent good humor of all these rough elements. Perhaps, too, I had really grown a little superstitious about my Faberger owl, for I held him tightly against me in the small bag which I carried on my wrist.

Old Mme. Ivanoff did not have my mascot, or my faith. As she watched the wavering mob, her dismal forebodings overwhelmed her, and she broke down. Trembling, she said she was too old to risk such conditions, and that she preferred to remain in Kief. Cantacuzène offered her no encouragement to accompany

us; and I, after protesting a little, decided it would perhaps really be better if she returned to evils she knew, rather than go on with us into the unknown; since in any case in the Crimea we must abandon her. I felt very sorry to say good-by to the kind little old lady; and I promised to return her trunk to her on the first chance occasion, since now it was no longer possible to recapture it from the mass of baggage. We parted sadly, feeling we should probably never meet again; and I keep a warm and grateful memory of her and her comfortable home. Her anxiety for our welfare was most touching, and her letters followed us on our wanderings for a long time.

Our train drew in. We had been placed, surrounded by our bodyguard, who held the small baggage, exactly on the right spot; and as soon as the last incoming voyager had descended to the ground, we slid on to the car steps, after which the crowding and pushing behind, only helped us forward to our places. We found the compartment held by Biron's men, and we occupied it. I had kept Élène with us in order not to lose her, and we also retained for the moment all our four men, till the first fight for seats should have subsided. Only Davidka left us, as he was going to travel in the baggage car in an attempt to defend our trunks from tampering or loss. In a compartment for two, consisting of one lower and one upper-berth, both of them narrow benches, we were two women and five men; and thus we stayed for hours, till we had convinced various groups, it was hopeless trying to accompany us. I knew from past experience that we could never keep the whole compartment for ourselves. I told Michael of this, and we decided when the second

rush of passengers should come, we would at least choose our companions in misery, and quickly and adroitly avoid, if possible, the dreadful dirty soldiers, or refugees, who might choose us. Soon our car was mobbed again, this time by a throng who came in on a train from the frontier military stations. Many soldiers among them were bound south, and meant to find room for themselves at all hazards.

We saw in the front of the mass entering the corridor a Sister of Mercy, clean, and in Red Cross uniform. "Quick, Sister, there is room for you here!" said Cantacuzène; and one of our guardians slipped out of the compartment window, while she pushed in through our door. I stored her with Élène on the top-berth, where they proposed to get on as best they could together. Below there were only my husband and myself and the rest of our guardians now. In a moment came along a huge, blond, amiable-looking creature, comparatively clean, well shaved, and dressed in the uniform of a colonel of our cavalry of the line. He had baggage which advertised three years and more of war service by its looks, and a tea-kettle was slung on one bundle which he carried; with him was a small, dark soldier, evidently his soldier servant, for they were talking with familiar gayety, in old patriarchal fashion. We at once added this pair to our party, and then, feeling that the most desirous of entering our compartment would acknowledge it could hold no more, we sent off our last guardians, and began to settle down. We closed the door, and opened the windows so we six in our small space could breathe.

With Élène and the sister on the upper-berth, their baggage stored in the racks about them, the colonel

and his soldier, Michael and I had the narrow lower berth and the floor-space to ourselves. The men gave me the seat nearest the window, and I rolled my cloak and furs behind me for a cushion, putting inside them my jewel case and the bag containing our money and papers. In front of me more bags were piled to a great height, with the provision basket on top, where it was within reach. My husband sat next me, with a roll of plaids behind him; then came the enormous colonel, radiating cheerfulness and gratitude, that he had been chosen, and saying with ready hospitality, "I can make you tea whenever you care for it. Ivan here will run for hot water at every station." Ivan, who squatted on the floor at his officer's feet, in Oriental fashion, and grinned at his luck in having escaped the roof through our invitation, looked ready for anything in the way of service. Cantacuzène introduced himself, since being in civilian clothes he could not be recognized. The colonel in turn gave his name, and announced he had a leave, as had his Ivan also, and that they were going home for two months to Simferopol, the Crimean capital. We should, therefore, be making the entire trip together. I said I would feed the party and, since we could count on the colonel for tea, and Ivan for errands, we should keep house most comfortably in our compartment. By this time, though we were still in the yards, soldiers were settling on the roof, all the compartments were packed, and our corridor had numerous people and much baggage piled in it.

But this was not all that was coming to us. After another hour of waiting, we were hitched to our locomotive, and were dragged into the station, where a new

set of what seemed lunatics tried to take us by storm. Secure in the fact that we were already like sardines in our compartment, and could tempt no one, we sat quietly listening. The colonel laughed. " It is worse than the noise of battle. They are wild beasts, not men," he said.

A new wave surged into the corridor, and the roof above us creaked. Heads were stuck in at our window, eyes looked, and their owners were convinced at once; then the head drew out again. Our door was pounded, and Ivan instantly opened it. " Two above, three below, one on the floor; also much baggage." And the intruders passed on. A general, who was alone with two aids-de-camp in the next compartment to us, was less lucky than we. He refused to open his door, and with cries of " Bourgeois! " " Capitalist! " " General! " his window was smashed on one side, and the mirror in his door on the other. After that oaths, and noise, and more breakage all about; but no one seemed hurt. Now the corridor was so full none could sit down there, save a few who had come early, and had perched on top of their bags and bundles, near the ceiling. Our colonel peeped out, and reported the toilet room was taken over by several soldiers; and that we couldn't possibly reach it during the trip, since it was more than one's life was worth to get through such a distance. Two wounded officers were raised over heads in the crowd. Word came along, " Wounded officers," and somehow they were carried, or passed, from hand to hand. Before they reached us, two charitable people had given up places to them. Various travelers cried out that they had fragile packages, and they found hands at once

willing to save these, and to store them away in the upper racks. Some were even handed in to us. One was passed me by a soldier, who said with interest, "This is a cake. Belongs to a lady out here in the corridor. Please keep this side up!"

I am sure no one but Russians could make a revolution in such a contradictory manner. It was hot, stuffy, and frightfully uncomfortable in our compartment and the stench from the corridor was unbearable. I persuaded my companions it would be better if, in spite of the November cold, we left our window open, and really only this kept us alive.

At night we slept, sitting up on the hard, unmade berth; there were neither cushions nor bed-clothes, which had long ago been stolen. We couldn't get at our own, nor think of unpacking any of our bags. Impossible to move or to change places either, and equally impossible to stretch out. Above, the two women were lying down, but they had no room for an upright position, and it was hotter where they were. The colonel and Cantacuzène risked taking off their boots; Ivan curled up, and in the darkness it was impossible to make out how he managed to take so little room. He was, I found, a Mohammedan Tartar soldier, seemingly devoted to his master, and anxious to please and serve us; and when awake he was all smiles. Now he slept soundly, though occasionally he stirred, or woke and listened, then looked at the colonel and went to sleep again, like a true watch-dog.

Pitch-dark it was in the car, save for the moonlight coming through my window, and very cold. The colonel snored comfortably and resassuringly. My

husband moaned in his sleep, with the pain of his wound, and worn nerves. Both women were quiet in their berth above and all through the car there was the heavy weight of slumber. The morning came early, and from sheer discomfort children cried, and women's voices complained or consoled, while men lent good-natured assistance, here and there; or swore.

I had fallen asleep towards dawn, but not for long. I was too spoiled to rest well in such cramped quarters, but fortunately I had plenty of reserve strength to draw on, and my desire at last fulfilled, to make this trip, helped me to content in spite of discomfort. Knowing we were at last on our road, I even tried to philosophize about the possible loss of our trunks; which I hoped were on our train, under Davidka's capable eye. Then I found myself wondering if we should get through. We ought certainly to be all right; since the Faberger owl was along; so why worry? Thus far we had come out of Kief safely, and that was already much to the good.

In the morning, at our first stop, Ivan went through the window, and fetched the colonel's kettle full of boiling water; then he and his master made us excellent tea, drawing the leaves from a newspaper scrap, and some sugar lumps from a rag, all of which were packed together in an old flour sack they carried, tied with a string. I found cups, and bread and butter in our provision basket, and we breakfasted contentedly enough. Then the men smoked, and talked of their army experiences; and the colonel asked many questions, for he had not left the firing line (far off in Galicia) for ten months and more; and he was under the impression the rest of the army, like his Tartar

regiment, was about all right, and doing its duty in spite of ridiculous propaganda. He was amazed to hear from Cantacuzène details of the occurrences in Kief, and farther north. He had judged the whole situation by his own men's behavior. These scarcely spoke Russian, and were vague in their politics. Incidentally they were excellent soldiers, remnants of the old conquerors from the "Golden Horde." Nearly all of them were rich for their class, and were proprietors of land in the Crimean peninsula; consequently they were conservatives. He was shocked to see conditions as they were now on the railroad; but he accepted this with resigned toleration. On the whole, in spite of what we told him, he was evidently keeping his easy, humorous optimism, and he was helped by his comprehension of his compatriots into believing in them through any vagaries of disturbed times.

As the long hours passed and we dozed, or read, or chatted, I appreciated our colonel more and more. He was a thoroughly Russian type, dignified and never familiar, though always friendly and helpful. His tea and sugar and his servant were entirely at our service; but he showed great hesitation in accepting any of our provisions for himself and Ivan. All his conversation was addressed to Cantacuzène, and he did not propose lighting a cigarette, till I thought of telling him I did not object to smoke. He was as modest as to the space he and his bundles should take, as it was possible to be; and was the most undisturbing traveling companion one could imagine. He saw how ill my husband was, and he went on from war topics to entertain Cantacuzène with anecdotes and stories. He even gave us (in mimicked copy) a complete en-

tertainment he had heard by a comic story-teller somewhere at the front, and which he remembered remarkably well. Though evidently a sociable chatterbox he could be quiet also, and he let us rest through hours. While he told us of his life and family at home, he never once asked an indiscreet question. He cheered and jollied up the Red Cross sister, who was very peevish indeed, giving first a headache, then a toothache, as her excuses. Finally, we all sympathized with her, and forgave her crossness and complaints. Our colonel was ready to talk politics, and he greatly encouraged us, by not regarding the situation as hopeless even now. "We Russians like the longest way round, and lots of messing, even to accomplish a little thing; and now how much more must there be noise for these great events."

Another long night, and we had still no possibility of moving from our places. I had not even taken off my gloves or veil for thirty-six hours; and when we approached the station, where we must change trains for Simferopol, it was a serious question how we should get out of our prison. Nearly all the passengers were remaining on the cars, and going towards the Caucasus. Impossible, therefore, to get through the corridor; and we were five people, and all those bags, which must be somehow removed. My husband was dreadfully perplexed. I had watched so many going in and out of windows, that though all these had been men, I felt I had learned their method, and could follow it in spite of cloak and skirt and furs. So I proposed this to Michael, saying it seemed to me infinitely preferable to the idea of traveling beyond our destination. I knew Élène would follow me, if I gave her

a lead, and I thought it would be easy enough, if only I had something to land upon below, as the distance from the window-ledge to the ground was about three times my height. The colonel, on the alert, had heard our talk, and he now intervened, "Ivan and I will go first, and pile our bags; then you and your maid shall come, Princess, and we will help you land; then the Prince shall pass us your bags, and follow himself." And so we did it.

As we drew into the station, it looked a vast hive of angry bees, and when the train stopped, the spry Ivan scrambled through the window and dropped lightly. The colonel threw him their bags, which made a soft, mountainous cushion on the ground. Then the ponderous colonel himself passed, and I caught my breath, for I thought he had stuck in the narrow window; but he wriggled through somehow, and fell down on his property with a mighty thud. Now was my turn. First, I scrambled up on our pile of bags and, reaching the window sill, I sat down, swinging my feet outside. Then I wrapped my cloak tightly around me, so it could not catch or float, but held my skirts. With the jewel case tight in my arms, and the bag of valuables in one hand, also holding my muff, I gritted my teeth, shut my eyes and jumped. It was very intimidating, but I felt myself safely caught and put upon my feet, as I landed. The kindly colonel had seized me just at the right moment, as I flew through the air, and I had not even felt a jolt.

Élène dutifully followed; but having reached the window sill she looked below, and cried with a despairing voice, "I can't! Oh, I can't!" She looked frantic and disheveled. "Jump at once!" I said.

"You must." But Cantacuzène was more energetic. Without a word, he pushed her from behind; and with a scream, she cleared the space, and landed near me, where the colonel steadied her. Our bags followed. Then my husband unlocked the door into the corridor, and saying to the crowd in the hall, "There are five free places in here," he made a rush for the sill, stepped through the window, and dropped beside us, while the occupants of the corridor broke into our compartment with a howl, as of triumphant wolves; and the little Red Cross sister shrieked. I've no doubt, however, they all shook down soon, and made their trip in perfect friendliness afterward.

We rushed into the station. I felt dazed and crippled by the long trip, with its fatigue of enforced immobility; and Élène and I lost no time in reaching for dressing bags, and hunting up the ladies' private rooms, where, though there were fifty or more women as traveled-stained as we, and the place was far from attractive, I enjoyed my first sight of soap and water for two days. Never had I had greater pleasure, than that given me by sponge and toothbrush, and my rubber traveling-bowl filled with hot water, all laid out on a window sill of that dirty station room.

Our train did not leave till noon, and I drank bad coffee without either cream or sugar; then I slept soundly for two hours, with my head on my muff and jewel case, which were propped upon the restaurant table. Michael waked me in time to get on our next train, which was expected from Moscow. He was very anxious, because he feared this part of our trip would be worse than the first chapter had been, since now we must get into a train already filled with

travelers. He was wondering how we should ever negotiate the corridors! I reminded him we still had the bird along, by way of valuable help; and strong with our recent experiences, I said Élène and I were not afraid of going through windows. We had hired two sturdy baggagemen, and had promised each five rubles if they secured us places. In the crowd on the platform our colonel saw us; and he and Ivan joined us at once. "Of course there will be places," he answered Cantacuzène's inquiry. "I am the biggest, and I shall go in first, instantly, as the train stops. You will be just behind me, and you shall be served."

So we lined up, and as the car stopped, a flying wedge went up its steps and in, with the valiant colonel at the apex. He scolded, coaxed, joked and apologized, as he shoved through, drawing our two sturdy baggagemen and myself along; while my husband and Ivan, just behind us, brought up the rear. It was a complete triumph, largely because of our energetic action, but also because in this Moscow express there was slightly more room than in the other train, and only a dozen or twenty occupants were in the corridor. I was shoved somehow into an empty seat in a compartment, between a gentleman, fat and very grumpy, and a neat pleasant looking officer. Beyond him sat a shy, miserable young woman, with lovely black eyes, big turquoise earrings, and an untidy, dressy silk gown, who spoke Italian with her husband, as he stood in the corridor near her.

I slipped off my ulster and furs, and rolled them into a bundle, to use as a cushion; then I sat down with a sigh of real joy. Here was room enough, clean companions, and good air; and only twelve hours more

of traveling! To cap the climax of our happiness, Davidka had managed to get the trunks off on another train, slower but ahead of us. The worst of our trip certainly was over, and though we were scattered about, and I hadn't the vaguest idea what had become of our bags or the provision basket, I hopefully left them to Élène's care, and let myself go to solid enjoyment.

The Italian lady nearby was telling the officer of all she and her husband had been through; how, driven from their estate and home by the peasants, they had seen "flames mount into the sky as the tigers set fire to our house and sugar factory, while we fled by carriage to Kief. Luckily some of our fortune is in government war-loan bonds, and now we go to the Crimea, to see if it is quieter there, and to rest; then we shall go to my home country, Italy, and I will never come back. My husband is driven away by the very people who have lived off our factory for many generations. It is a horrible country, your Russia." "It is truly rather wild just now," said the officer in a consoling voice, but he smiled bitterly. "We have much to learn yet, and must suffer first undoubtedly. We also have had great troubles at the front. The soldiers are all frantic with their new liberties, and they understand nothing. I am going for a leave of two months to Yalta, and I hope to have peace and quiet there for that long at least, whatever comes afterwards." I joined in their conversation a little, offering what optimistic arguments I could for the future, and I added my faith in the Russian national strength, also in the beauty of the people's ideals, which I counted on finally to help us to a good ending out of the actual drama.

Above us, on the upper berth, lay an old man, agitated and a little too talkative; I fancied somewhat the worse for having emptied a flask which he held in one hand. He loudly tried to enter into the conversation, and then he slept.

My fat neighbor on the other side continued silent, indignant he had so many traveling companions; yet he was in the best corner near the window, and had two of the red velvet train cushions behind his back; while neither the officer nor I had even one. With his European clothes, he wore on his close-shaved head a tiny, Tartar, red velvet skull-cap, embroidered in gay colored silks. He looked like a fat, grotesque statuette. Unresigned to the discomfort, for which he quite evidently held the Italian woman and myself largely responsible, he had protested when I entered that the compartment was "complete"; but ignoring him, I had sat down without a word. Now he wriggled, and moved a large pasteboard box, which probably contained his best costume. It stood between us. "It is very crowded," he said. At once, and without remark, I took hold of the big box and put it on a pile of luggage opposite me. "That is my box," he said. "So I suppose," I answered; "but it is large and made me uncomfortable, and now you say you are so too; consequently we will remove it." And I sat back much more at ease, and turned again to join the conversation on my left. He evidently thought of protesting and recapturing his property, restoring it to the old place; and then he gave up the idea, and coughed furiously. The man from the upper-berth awoke, and with much talk and apology, scrambled down to our level, and went into the corridor. "He is insupport-

able! Up and down all night disturbing us. I have had no sleep at all," said he of the Tartar-cap. I turned on him. "That sounds like our trip," I said. "We were six in a compartment, for two nights and a day, with five extra hours beforehand sitting in our car, at the Kief train-yard; and we could not move as here into the corridor, nor touch our bags, nor wash, nor rest." He evidently felt my story put his troubles in the shade, and he was quiet again. Soon he drew a bit of bread and a bottle of milk from his provision basket, ate and drank, and then he had a nap. When he woke up, my husband had brought me a French newspaper to read, which contained the latest war-telegrams. "When you have finished that journal, Madame, would you allow me to look at it?" said my fat neighbor suddenly, in most humble tones. I felt I could afford to consent, after the triumphs of having kept my seat, and disposed of his box, so I passed him the paper, after I had read it, with my best smile. "Do you read French?" I asked. "It is in French." "Yes, Madame, I read that easily enough."

Cantacuzène came in, bringing tea and some biscuits. He asked me in English if I would like anything else from the basket, and then he offered the Italian lady some of our beverage, which she accepted with pleasure. Drawing sugar from her pocket she gave me a share of that. We drank the tea together, and went on with our talk, while my fat neighbor and the officer accepted biscuits. I felt very weary later on, and, seeing me pushing my cloak about, the fat man said, with an evident desire to have his crimes forgiven, "Won't you have one of these cushions? I have two." I took it and was luxurious. I slept some time, and on awaking

I found my cross old neighbor had completely thawed. "May I be indiscreet, Madame, and ask your nationality?" he said. "You speak of Russia with good-will and affection, even in these dark days; and yet you are obviously not Russian. You read French; yet you are not French, since you are not agitated, as are the Latins. You spoke English, but you are not British, I am sure, for you are more animated and more sociable than are they; and I have long been inquiring in my mind what you may be?" I laughed. "I am a Russian subject. My husband and children are all Russians, but I was born in America," I said. "Surely, yes. That would be it exactly. When you came in I protested; but you sat down and stayed, without an argument. When you took away my box, it was an accomplished fact without insult, discussion or comments, which would have been British or French. Then you were not cross from my crossness. Yes, certainly, American and Russian. A good combination. Most interesting." "And you, Monsieur? Are you Russian?" "Yes," he answered, "from the misguided Ukraine I come. I was one of the old government's officials in Poland, but my corner went into German hands during the retreat of 1915, and I naturally had to drop out of the service. Since then, having a little money, I had been observing things from the side, and resting quietly. I live in Kertch, the Crimea."

We grew to be quite chums shortly; and we talked through several hours. I found my old neighbor was full of kindness now, anxious to make up for my first bad impression. Soon he offered me his seat by the window, so I should be less disturbed by the going and coming of "that idiot from above." He told me

of his family and life, too, but we talked mainly of Russia. I found he believed in her future as I did; but he considered the reign-of-terror which these German-injected Bolsheviki would bring, must be lived through, and he only hoped it would be short enough not to ruin us completely. "As to help from outside, we must have it if we are to recover from our hysteria. It must come from the Allies, or else Germany will conquer us completely, and though she may give us tranquillity, it will be at the price of our life-blood," said he. I like odd types always and the fat man became charming now. Together we ate our supper, and I traded him an apple and a hard-boiled egg for some cookies he had; while we both used his milk and sugar, with my tea. He left us that evening, but before going he called in Michael to inherit his place and cushion for the night. This was a great luxury, since we must continue our trip till four of the morning.

It was now three nights and two long days we had traveled, without once lying down, or being really comfortable for a moment, and as we drew near Simferopol, I felt I should be able to stand no more. My husband was ghastly, and I began to wonder if he would not break down, before we reached our destination. I counted we could get hot food at the station, which I remembered as clean and gay in the summer. Then we would start at once in a good auto, on the trip of nearly eighty miles, across the mountains, to my mother-in-law's villa at Siméiz, on the southern coast.

The station I had looked forward to with such anticipation was a terrible disappointment; and because I had hoped for good air, seats, and breakfast, it seemed

to me this was the worst experience of all. My tired eyes saw millions of men, in worn and dirty khaki, all pushing us, or lying under our feet; and the stench was so dreadful that one could scarcely breathe. Twice I worked my way to the only open window, which was in the women's dressing room, for a breath of air, and this was already filled with a number of women, who had either fainted, or were near it, like I was from the crowd in the main room. The rest of the station, packed till there was hardly a corner with standing room, was dimly lighted by run-down broken lamps.

Since Sebastopol, where our railroad line terminated, was closed to all passengers save its own inhabitants and the sailors who were on duty there, this small station of Simferopol became the clearing-house for the whole Crimean coast; and it was the traveling terminus for the soldiery who came south as well. Half the crowd was made up of these deserters, all carrying huge bags, with food and other comforts for themselves. The other half seemed Tartars with their families, or Jews, or refugees and beggars. All had bundles. I never conceived so much apparent misery and dirt, as there was here. Eating was out of the question, and chairs we seized through luck, after more than an hour's waiting. Rest was impossible in such noise, and I proposed moving out to the platform for our long wait; but after inspection my husband refused, saying the crowd was greater there and even rougher than inside; that it was completely dark yet and seemed unsafe for Élène and me. So we resigned ourselves, and remained suffocating where we were, from four A. M. till after seven.

Men, women, children, lay about us on the floors, asleep or half awake; unpacking, eating, dressing there, without scruple. We had to watch our bags constantly, and two or three times we turned suspicious-looking people, whom we judged to be thieves, away from them. A crowd of half-drunken rowdies in uniform were singing loud songs; and at the other end of the hall there occurred a violent political discussion between a sailor and a soldier. Soon, people were taking sides, and it ended in blows of course, which we feared would spread and become a general free fight. In another direction some women were shrilly accusing one another, and these also drew a group about them, who encouraged the fuss, till they had to be separated by force. Babies screamed, and everyone shouted, or swore and struggled, and then collapsed apparently in heaps.

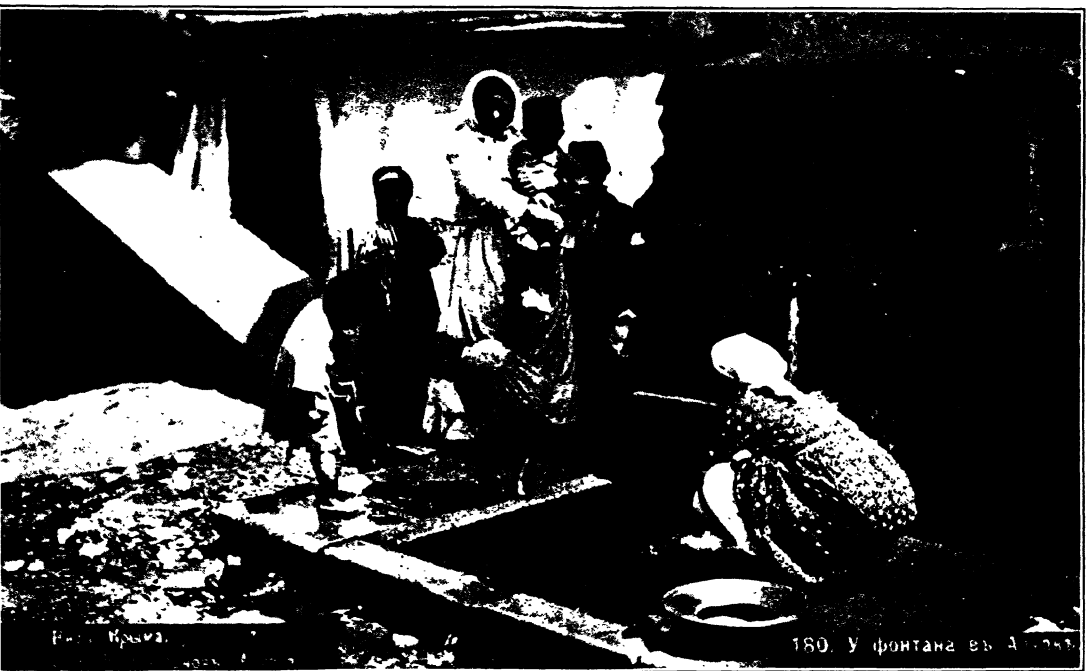
It was really an anxious three hours to live through, and Michael felt and looked so ill, I was frightened for him; but at last daylight came, and the welcome sun appeared; also various motor-cars with their agents.

CHAPTER XIX

THE CRIMEA

We lost no time in renting one of the autos, and in leaving Simferopol, and as the fresh air struck my face, and I realized the nightmare of our travels was over for this time, I was deeply grateful to the special providence which had guided us! We were safely out of Kief, and, I hoped, through with the worst of our experiences; and although we still had some discomforts and dangers ahead, I counted there would be no further subjection of my husband to particular pursuit, since from now on, we should be beyond the Ukraine provinces, and out of reach of those who sought revenge. So for the moment we might put anxiety behind us, and enjoy the soft springs of our conveyance, and the utterly splendid Crimean scenery, which I most specially loved.

I recalled the sunrises I had watched when making this drive before; and I questioned our chauffeur as to why the cars now came so late to the Simferopol station to gather travelers. "Because it is no longer safe, lady. Outside the station our motors would be stolen or broken by the soldiers, and on the road we should be stopped and attacked by the same comrades, if we traveled early as of old; and you would probably be relieved of all your baggage." So even down here, in this delicious lost corner of our country, where the



Tartar Types in the Crimea

first of the revolution had passed so quietly, the troubles now had penetrated! I was silent under the stress of pity and regret for it all. My husband suddenly feeling the strain on his nerves relaxed, dozed off, and I had all the beauty of our wonderful drive to myself.

First, through the fertile valleys, then up into the hills we went, and still on upward, till the rocks showed little vegetation, and there was thick, soft snow in their crévasses. But the semi-tropical sun shone always hot upon us, from a sky renowned for its invariable blue perfection. Then over the pass; and at our feet as we crossed, lay the panorama which for centuries has attracted beauty lovers to the Crimea, and which poets have sung and artists painted, without ever exhausting its fine resources. The revolution seemed impossible in this paradise. No wonder invalids came, and that so many poor exiles now chose it as their refuge. In terraces downward, lay, first, rocks, then woods, then vineyards and small prosperous fields; while below those again were gardens, riotous with greenery and flowers, edging the waters of the laughing, sparkling, turquoise sea. The latter changed to deep purple and emerald-green in spots where it was lined with seaweeds, or where sharp yellow crags pierced its smooth surface, standing up for waves to beat or gather round. Hanging to the mountain's side were picturesque villages, with pink and blue terraced houses, and showers of climbing roses. The Oriental Tartars lived in these, clustered about their quaint white mosques. The mosques themselves fitted the landscape much better than did the occasional Orthodox churches one saw, and evidently many visitors from afar appreciated this fact, for a great percentage

of the villas and palaces half hidden in their parks, were of the Moorish type, and white. It was all silent, rich, orderly and of a fairy-like splendor; and after the past weeks in Kief, and our discouragements, I was ready to cry with joy in it all. I felt I knew just how a pilgrim appreciated Paradise, after a stage in Purgatory.

Downward we wound, and the temperature changed so rapidly that within a short half hour, I dragged off first my furs, then cloaks, and finally my sweater, and we opened all the car windows to let in the feast of fresh sea air and sun, soft to the touch. We stopped near a small restaurant on the quai in the first town we reached, and were served quickly and with a smile by a pretty country girl, who recognized me from my last trip, and asked after the children. Never in my life had coffee and rich cream, hot toast and fruits tasted so good. Cantacuzène woke up, and did full justice to his share of the food. He still looked haggard; but his spirits were answering to the charm of our surroundings, and I hoped the Crimea would mend his health enough to make the long trip northward, that must follow, seem easier to him.

After breakfast, our road skirted the coast, through woods and attractive watering places, where gay hotel guests in pretty clothes were shopping or strolling, and listening to music, as if wars and revolutions were far away indeed. By Yalta we passed, rich and luxurious still, and beyond it were "Livadia" and "Oréanda," with the Imperial palaces shining in the light. No wonder the ex-Emperor had loved this, his private home, which did not belong to the state. I thought of the large family living now crowded into that small,

far-away house, in a freezing Siberian town. What a contrast to all this! . . . "Ei-ta-dor" came next, where the poor Empress Mother lived with her daughter and the latter's family, under surveillance now, and without the right to pass these gates. All their hopes and faith of the spring were done for, and gone! "Tchaïre" also we passed, where the old Chief was, like a wounded lion, hidden from view, under arrest, with sentinels at his gates, though he was still allowed a few faithful attendants, with Orloff at their head. He never complained, never protested; though I was told he was breaking fast from his grief at Russia's abasement!

Finally, we reached my mother-in-law's villa at Siméiz — simple, but comfortable and pretty; all white, with a garden of roses in bloom, and a view of mountains behind, and sea before; and large enough to house her group quite easily. There was great excitement over our arrival. She had not seen her son since she had been in Petrograd, where the Princess and Cantacuzène had lived through the first days of the revolution together. I, also, had not met her since the spring. She was greatly distressed by my husband's evident bad health, and glad we had left Kief. Michael reported as to her business, and it seemed she and her household might consider themselves protected and comfortable for a year ahead at least by his financial arrangements. She had settled herself in the "Villa Selbi" for that long, and we brought additions to her stores both of money and provisions — enough to stand a siege.

Her only danger was from the motor-loads of Bolshevik soldiers or marines, who made expeditions from

Sebastopol all over the country, expressly to steal and kill. They especially threatened the members of the Imperial family farther along the coast, but were a danger to all rich refugees; and the latter lived in constant fear of visitations. My mother-in-law had entirely changed her feelings towards the revolution during the summer months, and from her immense enthusiasm, she had passed to an especial horror of those first revolutionaries who had established the provisional government. She could not find words strong enough to speak her anger and contempt, and she vowed that when she should be able to go beyond the frontier, she meant to live always away from Russia, and never again have to do with any of our people. Her French soul and powers of expression served her well in the present condition of her mind!

I saw no one else, however, who took quite her point-of-view, though all the Russians who were refugees on these southern shores were most pathetic sufferers. Having lost heavily by the revolutionary movement, they felt terribly discouraged. Nearly all had had estates, which were now gone, and poor Princess Wiazimsky had lost two sons, besides — one killed by accident in the streets of Petrograd, one murdered by his own peasants on his country estate. Yet when I saw her, she was calm and gentle, and even seemed to trust in Russia's future. . . . Sazonoff, whom I met at Yalta, had lost his fortune also, but was hopeful, he said, that the Bolshevik régime would now precipitate events to such an extent, that either there would be a sudden reaction in our country, round some Napoleonic leader, or if that was impossible, then the Allies would feel obliged in their own interests to inter-

fere, and he preached courage and confidence on this basis. Orloff was as cool as in the spring. He admitted danger to the old Grand Duke and incidentally to himself, but he hoped for the best, and he considered the Crimea comparatively safe for the average inhabitants. Its Tartars were conservative, owning land themselves; and Orloff counted on their taking care of the refugees, if only in order to exploit them.

We tried to see the old Chief, but permission was refused to all people coming from outside. It was the same with reference to the occupants of "Ei-tador" whom I asked about; so we had to be content with messages sent back and forth. Everyone was very brave, I thought; and the exiles all seemed ready to do anything possible to help one another. They were determined to give way to anxiety, only when they should be sure they could not escape the threatening dangers. Meantime they lived quietly and simply, saw one another sociably in Yalta, and tried to rest a little from the fatigues of the past three years. Every Russian noble I saw was more sad about our action towards the war than about his own private distresses; and each one said "anything could be forgiven, but the revolutionists' failure to keep faith with our Allies." Some feared our defection might mean Germany's victory, and this thought caused the worst suffering. No one blamed the people much; on the contrary, many thought the revolution in the long run would develop our nation. Of course without exception, these aristocrats deplored the passing of the old, beautiful traditions, and the poetry of our country life with its patriarchal relations between proprietor and peasant; and undoubtedly these *had* disappeared

for good. All spoke with pity of the poor Emperor and his danger, and of the sad, imprisoned life of the Imperials here in the Crimea.

Again, I was struck with the extreme beauty of the Russian nature, its strength of faith and patience, its dignity, and the gentle generosity and fine breeding which troubles only had brought out. Not a sign of panic, nor of envy for us, who were going away, out of it all. Only care was expressed, and anxiety, and good wishes for our safety during the long journey.

Two weeks passed all too quickly. To me saying good-by was hard, and I didn't want to go, leaving all these associates of years behind. Yet the reasons for our departure made it seem imperative. If my husband was ever to regain health and strength, it could only be by going quite away from all these surroundings, with their tragic influences. There was nothing more he could do to serve the country now; and with means of communication cut, he and I should be but two more mouths to feed from the family supplies; whereas, beyond the frontiers we no longer depended on them.

It was infinitely difficult, we found, to get places and tickets to go north to Petrograd; but fortune served as usual, and a kind friend who was giving up her trip, ceded us two compartments, which she had retained long ago. By an amazing miracle the Soviet of Sebastopol sailors replied to Cantacuzène's telegraphic request granting us permission to pass through their fortress city and to embark upon our journey from the railroad-terminus there. Our family would not believe this permission possible, till we proved it to them by exhibiting our telegram. I was immensely

grateful for this boon. Now it would be possible to settle ourselves and our belongings in the empty train, and we had some hope we might even hold the reserved places we paid for, since it was a direct express train we were taking.

The final good-bys were distressing, and I feared very much we might never see the family again. I hated leaving all the members to such danger. It was hard for the poor old Princess to be going through such trials at seventy, after her easy and luxurious life. It was also too sad for my sisters-in-law and their children, all in fragile health, and with despair in their hearts, to face the future. They made a tragic picture as we parted!

It was the fifth of December, and though we were leaving the southern coast bathed in sunshine, and draped in flowers, our mood was not in tune. Numerous pessimistic friends foretold that our telegram from the Sebastopol Soviet was a trap; and they were not reassuring as to what would happen to us when we got into the Bolsheviks' fortified city. They felt sure we would be attacked, or at least detained under arrest. Others, equally dismal, said this first part of our travels might turn out all right, but once embarked on the train, our troubles would certainly begin. And they told us the express trains were especially ill-treated. The Cossacks on the Don River were gathering under Generals Kalédine and Korniloff (who had now escaped from his prison, during an uprising at staff headquarters and had managed to traverse half of Russia incognito, joining Kalédine at Novoe-Tcherkass). A battle was expected between them and the Bolshevik forces moving to meet them from Moscow,

while the Ukrainians were also sending troops from Kief and Poltava. No one knew on which side the latter would take part. We should undoubtedly be caught between two fires, we were told, and be killed in the scrimmage. We heard there was no food in Petrograd, and that everyone was being assassinated, while permission to go beyond the frontier was always refused. The refrain of all conversations was the utter folly of our contempt!

My husband and I discussed with some hesitation what we should do, but we finally decided circumstances would not be improving for a long time, and that if we wanted to go abroad, we must try to do so now. Going seemed a necessity, because of Cantacuzène's health, and from every point-of-view we found it better to put our luck to the test, while we still had sufficient strength of nerve, and money in plenty, and while communications seemed possible. We knew if the Cossacks' raiding cut the country in two, or if the railroads broke down through strikes, we should be tied up in a bag in the Crimea, helpless to carry out our plan. Having once decided, we promised ourselves that whatever happened, we would not regret our present act; and that we would leave no possible stone unturned to get through successfully. If, from Petrograd, we could not push on to foreign lands, we would simply gather what ready money we could from there, and somehow manage to return, then establish ourselves near the family group for an indefinite stay. Meanwhile we were ready to pay in coin and with all our resources to get through.

By way of beginning, my jewels were sewn into our traveling clothes, where they would attract less

attention, and be less encumbering than in the jewel case. We then divided our money, so each should carry half, in case one or the other of us should be searched and robbed, or we became separated. In case of accident, we took ten thousand rubles in bills. We reduced our baggage to the last limits, leaving two trunks to my mother-in-law, and with our determination wound up for any emergency, we took the first step on our journey.

Davidka started ahead by some hours, driving our trunks in a cart harnessed with a troika of good horses. We followed by motor. He was to wait for us, at the gates of Sebastopol, since my husband had the pass for us all on one paper. Cantacuzène was in civilian clothes, but our passports naturally gave our names and rank, and were obliged to show them. I counted much on Davidka's soldier uniform to help us out.

We were too excited to talk during our long drive. Upward we climbed to the pass in the mountains, and from there turned for a last silent look at the beautiful garden-of-paradise: the Crimean coast below. As we came out of the narrow Baïdarsky Gateway in the rocks, and faced northward, the bleak cold winds blew against us, with a flurry of snow. Two or three hours we traveled onward through it, to the battlefield of Balaklava, and we passed the monuments of French, English and Russian soldiers, who had died and been buried there where they had fallen, enemies in that great fight of long ago. Then we reached the outside fortifications of Sebastopol, and were stopped at the guard-house.

Davidka and his cart were already there. Instead of the amiable dapper officer of old régime days, two

rough soldiers, with sullen faces came to meet us; but they were neither untidy nor drunk; and they read our pass, and then examined our passports with gruff, but perfectly intelligent comments. They were not entirely pleased with Cantacuzène's passport and mine, and hesitated a moment, while of course my heart went down into my boots. My husband explained we were only going through the city, leaving by the night train for Petrograd, and the men finally acquiesced, and said we might go in. I could have embraced them for being so hospitable!

We went to the hotel, dined, and had time to read a paper, and to take a turn about the town. It had acquired an evil reputation lately with the inhabitants of those regions where we had been. Ever since late June, when Admiral Koltchak had been dismissed by his fleet, destruction and disorder had radiated from Sebastopol over the whole country side, but now the place — though its sinister quiet and emptiness gave it an impressive atmosphere — was clean, and the most perfect order reigned. There were no crowds in the street, and no soldier deserters to be seen anywhere. All the sailors were trim, neatly dressed and freshly shaved, so I had a restful impression, as of civilization.

However, at the hotel the director bewailed losses suffered through dearth of travelers, and through constant requisition of his provisions. Some French officers were in the hotel, mainly young aviators; but they seemed on the eve of departure, and otherwise the house was practically vacant. At the station, it was the same — few travelers, no motley public at all, almost no soldiers, a sprinkling of smart sailors and naval officers with their families, everything clean, and

business being run without confusion. We found our train easily and quickly, and our car, also. We paid twice the old prices or more, and we discovered that we had an entire trunk's weight more baggage than the very latest law allowed. We were ordered to leave the trunk, but this was so distressing, that Cantacuzène gave Davidka unlimited power to act for us, knowing the influence of a soldier's position. Our man did his best, and after a half-hour he returned to say, the trunk would not be confiscated. It might go along in spite of the recent rule; only he had been obliged to buy an extra first-class ticket, all the way to Petrograd, and to spend fifty rubles besides in bribes, because the ticket would not be used! We did not think of regretting our rubles, and were only too delighted to get off so easily!

In the train we had two compartments adjoining, and a dressing room; so if the "comrade soldiers" did not invade our premises, we might count on a very comfortable trip. At first, everyone had plenty of room. Two brawny sailors of the garrison got on our car, merely telling the conductor they "wished to do so," by way of excuse; but they promised, incidentally, to see that we had no other inconvenient guests. They were allowed to sleep in our corridor, and had soon settled down chatting quite genially with Davidka. The conversation seemed almost like old times, as I listened from my berth. I had put Élène with Davidka, and kept my husband with me, for the sake of protection, with the doors between the servants and ourselves all open, and we piled plaids and baskets, with our bags, against every window, so the station mobs along the road would think our places crowded,

and would not be tempted in. There was no longer a pillow or a blanket, or sheets left in any car. One of my windows was cracked from top to bottom, and of course undressing was impossible; but it was much to be able to lie down and stretch out, even if at any moment an invasion might be expected. I shivered to think of the masses awaiting our train at Simferopol, and elsewhere on our route! For the moment we could, however, count on a few hours of tranquil sleep, and we all hastened to seize that, having arranged in case of difficulty for our servants to simply give up their compartment, and join us in ours. Élène and I would then divide the upper berth, leaving Cantacuzène with his valet below.

I slept soundly till about two A. M. Then in a panic I awoke, and listened to howls and shrieks, thumps and bumps all about me. One woman was hysterical in the corridor. Her baggage was lost, and her hat with various other possessions had been dragged from her by the crowd; another feminine voice broken by sobs, told the same sort of tale farther on. Soldiers tramping and jumping to get warm on top of our roof, loud calls and oaths, more travelers with bags and bundles in the corridor, then a fight at the door, and sounds of broken glass, falling bodies, and high words; some quick threats of firing, laughter, irony, and the taking by storm of the cars beyond; all this there was, while our sailors could be heard keeping their word to us; for no intruders invaded our car. A window crashed just beyond me; and then a heavy thing was thrown against one of our own. Fortunately it held; and this seemed to discourage the attacking party. There were insults and cries of "Capitalists!" "Bourgeois!"

And I saw Michael feel for his revolver. We both sat up, and waited in silence for what might come. Nothing happened, and the train drew out of Simferopol leaving a vociferating group of seething humanity behind.

I took courage from this first experience, and went to sleep again; but we were told there would be other stations, where the crowd was worse than this had been, and we spent many anxious hours. Our sailor protectors were truly admirable. They were the greatest aid and comfort, fraternized with Davidka and Élène, and looked after our safety always. They admitted to the premises, during the two days and three nights to Petrograd, those who showed proper tickets for reserved places in our car, and made exception only in favor of three wounded soldiers, for whom they begged our hospitality. One of these was shot through the lung and could scarcely breathe; another, with a stomach wound, lay on his back; and the third was lacking both legs. There were no Red Cross trains since the revolution to transport such misery, and the wounded depended on chance. These three had been fortunate, for our big sailors and Davidka helped the poor fellows as much as they could, while my husband often talked to them and saw to their comfort, and we gave them tea and biscuits from time to time. With these men it didn't seem to matter about the revolution, or else it was because there was no German agent near enough to stir up trouble between us.

Safely we passed through the Cossack country, and the city of Kharkoff was one of our stops. . . . When, the next day, we reached Moscow, we read in special telegrams sold in the station, that there had just been

a battle during the night at this same Kharkoff, and all communications were cut off with the south, our train having probably been the last to go through. Finally, after all our false alarms, we reached the capital, twenty-four hours late, but quite content even though our trip had cost nearly two thousand rubles, when in old times three hundred would have amply paid for it. We thanked our protectors, the two sailors, for their good services, and we bade our wounded soldiers good-by, while they with enthusiasm all wished us well. We had had warm relations with them, such as certainly could never have existed in any other country in a like situation. It takes Russians to be so unexpectedly simple in the midst of complications.

We read in the papers on the road, of the mutinous uprising at staff headquarters when the commander-in-chief, General Doukhonin, had been arrested, and finally murdered in the railway station during his embarkation on a train for Petrograd. A comrade of Cantacuzène's, who had escaped from the fracas at the staff, afterwards told us the murderer was an Austrian officer, disguised as a Russian sailor; that General Doukhonin had known him in Vienna, where he had been before the war, and that he had called the false sailor by name, before the latter struck him down.

CHAPTER XX

PETROGRAD UNDER THE BOLSHEVIKI

Petrograd looked frightfully run down. The streets were lost in deep snow, frozen hard on them, but worn in ruts and holes, and the going was dreadful. The crowds were greater and more disorderly than ever. Hardly anyone ventured out at night without accident, which consisted generally in one's being stopped, and relieved of money, furs, woolen clothes and boots, then left to go one's way, almost naked in the cold. Misery stared out of every decent face. It was the dreadful soldiers who had now taken to selling every kind of stolen merchandise, and we bought on the street pavements several valuable editions of rare books for absurdly small prices. Evidently these came from some of the palaces which were being constantly looted.

Half the shops were closed, and many had been sacked, with their windows left broken; or they were boarded up against the street. Criminals infested the town, well-to-do people were feeling the pinch of actual hunger, while the honest poor were starving. The hideous Red Guards — who looked like men I have seen depicted in old French paintings, representing the reign-of-terror in Paris — were "keeping order" on all sides, dressed in rough clothes, with occasionally some fine garment in their make-up, evidently stolen. These men stalked about, or sat at street corners,

with excellent guns, drawn from our old reserves, loaded and slung across their shoulders by a rope, or hanging loosely over an arm, or even sometimes being used to bump along as a walking-stick. Naturally with such treatment guns were always going off.

At the street corners, fires were built and kept burning, to warm these protectors of the new government, and I personally saw many a Red Guardsman use the barrel, or the bayonet fixed to the barrel, of his loaded gun to stir the blaze! Constantly also one heard machine guns firing in various quarters of the city, while occasionally passers-by would rush for shelter under doorways, as the shooting approached. But no one stayed at home because of bullets, which had become a matter of constant recurrence. Prices of everything had soared to the sky, and people were obliged to pay, or to go unfed, unclothed, and unwarmed.

There is no word for the general depression; yet I saw all my old friends who were still in Petrograd and I found them glad to talk of outside things, or to laugh with sudden gay irony at some comic incident of their own plight, as they tried to forget their troubles for a little while. General Kamaroff was still in charge in the Winter Palace, and he told us of the horrible days, when the great building had been taken and sacked by the mob. I myself saw its broken panes of glass, and the walls riddled with bullets, and from several eye-witnesses we heard details of the multitude's work. Strangely enough, the rabble had passed by furniture, paintings, porcelains and bronzes of great value, and had even looked uncomprehendingly at a vitrine full of ancient Greek jewelry

wrought in pure gold. Saying disdainfully, "Those are toys," they had let them stand; and then they hustled one another to cut leather coverings off the seats of modern chairs in anterooms and in the Emperor's sitting room, and to knock down gilded plaster from the walls, sure it must be real gold. The great Malachite Hall had been smashed beyond repair, and infinite damage was done to some of the apartments of ceremony. The cellars had been robbed, till all the crowd was dead drunk. . . . All over the town the tragedy oppressed one, and the splendid capital seemed like some luxurious and renowned beauty, dying in the gutter, disfigured and disgraced.

On the street, I heard German spoken constantly and openly; and doubtful-looking men, with unmistakably German faces and clothes, went about with assurance. The deputies from the German Government had arrived, Count Mirbach at their head, and Brönstein (alias Trotzky) was entertaining them. General Kamaroff told me he had had a written communication from Trotzky, ordering him to send silver and linen from the Imperial storehouse at the Winter Palace to the hotel, where these German deputies lodged. Naturally he had paid no attention whatever to this document, and Trotzky had not protested. Kamaroff thought the visitors received such supplies as they needed from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, where Trotzky was himself established, and on which now hung a great white placard, with the words "Welcome to Peace!"

Tatischtcheff I saw, and he described Trotzky's entry into the ministry after Téréschtchenko's arrest. The assembled group of secretaries and officials, himself

at their head, handed Trotzky the keys to all the cupboards, and then bowing themselves out, had left their resignations piled on the center table. He pictured the new minister's surprise, and his perplexity as to how he should get on without their services, his threat to publish all the secret treaties of Russia with her Allies — a threat that was quite empty, though the creature did not know it, since long ago all important documents had been spirited away by loyal hands, and could not now be traced. The Germans had arrogantly protested against the hotel where they were lodged, saying it was not good enough, and probably not daring to offer the Winter Palace, Trotzky had moved them to the Astoria Hotel, where they held high carnival.

The conservative papers were printed only irregularly, while there were a hundred anarchistic sheets each day, of mushroom growth. These detailed the dastardly ambitions of the new leaders with reference to peace and German occupation, advertised new measures and inventions, such as the degrading of all officers to the ranks, and told of the new arrangement by which there were to be no more commanders, but only all equal soldiers. The new guillotine, which was to be erected in the Palace Square, was described in these papers. It was to be worked by electricity, and could cut off five hundred heads at each blow! Each day, some part of the city was in darkness, and the water supply was constantly expected to break down. All other public service was erratic, and telephones and cabs were entirely accidental luxuries. Even in our well-organized hotel, where we had gone into my same old apartment, with almost a feeling of home-coming

and of being protected, everything was more or less up in the air. We could not complain, however, as compared to those about us we lived in the lap of quiet luxury. By some miracle, we had the good will of the hotel servants, who gave us admirable care. Even when one day there was a strike below-stairs, and the other guests were without food, the waiter on our floor confided to me with his ever-ready grin, "Your Highness shall have your lunch and dinner as usual, served here in the salon, since we do not wish you to be inconvenienced." And so it was. Afterwards I learned our party were the only people in the hotel who had had any meals! It was quite puzzling. My husband had accused me of being in league with the Bolsheviki; but I have never understood the real reasons for the curious protecting influence that hovered about us through all our stay in Petrograd, unless it came from the devotion of these servants, whom I had known, and often talked with, through the three years I had been occupying that same apartment for my brief visits to the capital. I had done some of them small favors, but not enough to explain their present kindness. However, our relations had always been excellent, and the chambermaid had an ancient friendship with Élène.

The most mysterious proof of this care for us was an occurrence on the evening of our arrival. We had been warned by the hotel director on that first day of the constant visits the Bolsheviki made to our hotel to inspect and to requisition arms, which requisition amounted to their carrying off anything striking their fancy. In consequence of this, we had done up all our valuables, at once, and had carried them to my

bank, confiding them there to an old acquaintance, the manager of the Crédit-Lyonnais — all except my string of pearls, of which I was particularly fond, and some ear-rings, rings and pins I habitually wore. That evening we had dined, keeping with us a friend who dropped in casually, and when the latter left us, about ten, Cantacuzène finished smoking, and we moved to our bedrooms to begin preparations for the night. My room and my husband's communicated, and they were between Davidka's room, on Cantacuzène's left, and the salon, on my right, while my maid was placed alone, somewhat farther down the corridor. All our doors on the corridor were locked. In a dressing gown I was seated at my mirror, with clothes tossed on chairs, and odds and ends spread on the dressing table, when a knock on the salon door attracted my attention. Too lazy to rise and open it, I called out, "That door is locked. Go to Number 15." Davidka slept there, and I spoke to my husband, asking him to tell Davidka to get whatever was being brought. Cantacuzène, himself, always on the alert, went into his man's room, just as the latter answered the summons from the hall. In an instant my husband was back at our communicating door. He looked quite calm, and said to me, "Quickly get ready! It is the Bolsheviki. I will hold them a minute or two in my room; but they will want to come in here." Then he disappeared, and I heard loud conversation approaching from Davidka's room into his own.

I seized my pearls and rings, and threw them high into my wardrobe, where they fell down behind the piles of lingerie there; then I hid my new slippers and my traveling boots behind the tub in the bathroom;

and the Faberger bird went under a corner of the rug. There was nothing else I could put away, save my revolver, which I shoved into the lining of the empty traveling bag, as it stood open. Clothes, and furs and toilet silver must take their chances. I decided in order not to seem too busy, I would join Cantacuzène and his party. I entered his room, and remained fixed on the threshold from sheer amazement, for our much-feared Bolsheviki were already going out of the doorway, were saluting my husband respectfully in military fashion, and were giving him his title of "General" and begging his pardon for having disturbed us! I could scarcely believe my eyes and ears! Cantacuzène answered them amiably, and as they retired he closed the door and locked it, sending Davidka with the men to show them Élène's room. The twelve sailors making up the party were commanded by a young doctor, and they had simply examined our papers and had then said politely that these were in perfect order, and would pass. Two of the men had also remarked that they knew Cantacuzène since long before the revolution!

The following day our servants told us the sailors had left Davidka his revolver after some hesitation, and had said they knew all about his master, and that he was "ours." We have never comprehended to what we were indebted for such excellent treatment. Was it Cantacuzène's reputation since old times among his various commands as a liberal, and an officer they respected and were fond of? Was it the protection of the hotel servants and our own? Or was it sheer blind luck, and the influence of my Faberger bird? At any rate we gratefully accepted results, and for the time-

being eliminated the fear of Bolshevik inspection from our list of anxieties. Thereafter, though nearly every day bands of these men came to the house, and things in the rooms about us were confiscated, we lived with open doors, and in complete unconcern, and they paid us no further visits.

Towards the end of our stay in Petrograd, when conditions had grown worse, one day I received a telephone message from the manager of the Crédit-Lyonnais. He asked me to his office on urgent business, and naturally I lost no time in going. He received me with the news that by a mere chance he had been informed of the probability of all banks — foreign as well as Russian — being raided, and closed within a few days. Would I give him checks ahead on my account, for any sum we needed, to pay our traveling expenses? He could pay me this money from funds he had in the management's private safe, and then he would replace it there later, when it became possible to cash my checks. He said I must accept this arrangement, as already the banks were not allowed by law to hand out to their clients more than a thousand rubles a day. Even this would soon be stopped, with the complete closing of the banks, after which no one could act. Cantacuzène's money, he knew, was in a Russian bank, and could not be touched, and: "I want you and your husband to be able to leave the capital on the day fixed, so you must take my advice, Princess, now immediately. Also, to-day please carry your jewels home with you. If anything should happen to me, you could not get them, for I put your packages in my own private safe. One never knows, even if I am here, the Bolsheviki may

take it into their heads to confiscate all such objects, and insurance can't be claimed."

After a little hesitation I did as Monsieur C. . . suggested. I made a rapid calculation of what we should need till our departure, and for the trip, and I wrote him at his desk a series of checks, of one thousand rubles each, dated to follow one another on successive days; then he handed me the ten or eleven thousand rubles I required in bills. By way of recommendation he added: " Buy as many five-hundred-ruble bills of the old régime as you can find, even paying a premium for them, at your hotel and in any shops. On these you will get a good rate of exchange, even if our values here should drop still lower than now. The Germans are collecting them in Stockholm and in Copenhagen, and you mean to go that way, I understand? I have already given you all of those I have here."

Infinitely grateful, I tried vainly to put my thanks into words, and I asked with interest what he meant to do, and what would become of him? He laughed. " I am waiting the Bolsheviki's orders," he said, " and we are quite expecting their invasion here. Our books are all prepared for inspection. I think they won't ill-treat us seriously, as we are a French institution, but accidentally some of us might be killed. I know I am taking chances."

I inquired if my checks and his payment of them would not perhaps augment his difficulties. " Don't think of that, please, Princess," he replied. " I believe the men who will come here cannot judge of any accounts they see. If they disapprove of this, it is a very small detail, as compared to all the other irreg-

ularities I have on my conscience. For months I have been running the bank to fit outside circumstances, and the needs of our clients, taking care of the latter as best we could; and it has necessitated unconventional action constantly. If you hear I am killed, don't you and your husband reproach yourselves. I shall not die for you, most surely. Good-by, Princess, and good luck, and if you find I can serve you, in case I have lived through all this racket, let me know."

One couldn't have rendered a more thoughtful service in a kinder manner! . . . He had been correct in his information, for the very next morning the Bolsheviki took over, occupied and closed every bank in town. All the directors were arrested, and taken to "Smolny Institute," where the de facto government held high carnival, in an orgy of confusion. Most of these gentlemen of finance were set at liberty soon after, on payment of high ransoms, but till we left Petrograd, the banks remained closed, and had it not been for the providential warning and help of Monsieur C. . . . we should never have been able to leave Russia when we did.

The situation in the banks was very peculiar. The Bolsheviki — soldiers, sailors and Red Guardsmen — who had taken charge of them, were sorely disappointed not to find piles of gold and silver spread on the floors. This was apparently what they had expected. After a few days, remaining to guard premises which they considered valueless, bored them extremely; and in many cases they announced this fact, and with disgust departed; leaving the banking-houses empty, to the care of their own people again.

Banks were not allowed to open, however, even then, except at certain hours once a week, for the payment of money to factory owners. These must show the amount of their pay rolls in proof that what money they drew was only for their workmen, who belonged, of course, to the association of the Red Guard.

Most people had money hidden away in their houses and apartments, so at first the new difficulty was not particularly felt. It was regarded merely as an added anxiety for the future, but it helped to make the well-to-do public blue and lacking in confidence.

After I brought my jewels back to our hotel it became — in the constant uncertainty of life — a great question as to where we should keep them. We ended by tying them up in a bundle, together with our money, papers and other valuables, and then wrapping the latter in a small white table-cloth. We kept this quaint object near the window of our salon. Outside this window was a small balcony, from which the deep snow was never cleaned, and we decided should by chance our rooms be subjected to an unwelcome visit of Bolsheviki, or other thieves, it would only be the act of a moment to drop our precious bundle outside into the snow-drift; then we counted on the whiteness of the tablecloth, not to attract attention from any-one who might look out casually. The things could be very easily fished up later, and would be saved in this way from loss, whatever damage might be done to our other possessions within the rooms. As a matter of fact, occasion never presented itself to put our scheme into execution, but the dangers and sufferings of those about us were so constant, that we lived

with the idea our turn must come. Either my husband or I always remained at home, to be on hand in case of such accidents.

It was quite dreadful to see the troubles of those surrounding us, most of whom had not our hopes of getting away to lean upon. Someone or another of our acquaintances daily was refused permission to pass beyond the frontiers; and money was beginning to give out. Even those who had a large part of their fortunes capitalized were intensely anxious, since most of this was in some bank, and these were all closed, so more often than not, they were without ready funds. Estates were being confiscated, and practically all factories were out of commission. Town property was paying nothing, either, since no one settled rent or taxes. In my own case I discovered why. . . .

I had a large piece of city property, given me years before by my husband, which I managed myself. The intendant who looked after it informed me in September that none of the tenants — not even the municipality, which was the lessee of one apartment — had paid rent for six months, not in fact since the beginning of the revolution. I asked him why he, my business man, had not carried these cases to the courts.

"I have, your Highness, but when your lawyer appeared to file complaints, the court officials said they were not hearing any such cases now. It was quite useless, since no one of us could ever win, and no one had any money to pay. It finally had bored them to occupy themselves with such hopeless causes."

Then I suggested we take the law into our own hands, and give our tenants no dvorniki, unless they paid their rent. "This you may not do, Highness,

for the dvorniki themselves will then aid the tenants to destroy your property; and the mob will also come from outside to help them. I have seen many such cases."

Finally I gave orders that till the first of January the house expenses should be paid, and I left enough money with the intendant for this purpose; after which date he was to abandon the whole affair to take care of itself, and he was to pay no expenses or taxes till the inhabitants themselves should come to the rescue. At least it would not be a daily drain on me, and as proclamations announced that all city property would shortly be "nationalized," it seemed unnecessary to take care of it further. I found in questioning other proprietors that they were all going through my experiences and reaching my decisions, and General Kamaroff told me that even in the buildings belonging to the court (and at present to the government) conditions were identical, with neither laws nor police to mete out justice.

It certainly looked bad for the future of the government's finances, as well as for our own, and it also seemed as if soon all the city-houses would be falling in ruins, since no repairs were being made, and our climatic conditions are so bad. These dangers of poverty and disorder never seemed, however, to strike the demagogues in power. Trotzky made violent and blood-thirsty speeches, preaching anarchy and crime against the "counter-revolutionists," posing himself as the "protector of the people's revolution." I never could make out just what he and his government counted on for their continued popularity. Evidently they had no plans for saving Russia, or for doing any-

thing rational. Also, obviously they were the agents of Germany, stirring the country to a vast chaos of misery and uncertainty. Probably they foresaw that in the end the people would be completely exhausted, and ready to accept reconstruction at the hands of even the enemy's officials, whom they would thus introduce to a population grown too weak to resist such treatment.

Meanwhile, they offered the scum a long holiday, and Trotzky seemed to harangue them with great success. Usually, this happened at some immense meeting, about four o'clock in the morning. Beneath the two main criminals, leading the country to disaster, there were the ministries, nearly all closed, or "on strike," as it was called. But a few, like the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, did curious business and, in still more curious manner. With the secretaries and all the official staff gone, Trotzky felt obliged to fill the ministry offices again, and he appointed any workers willing to accept places: The head of one department was the door porter of the old régime's Foreign Office, and the "permanent chief of chancelleries," replacing Tatischtcheff, was an ex-interpreter, a Levantine, who had been used in ancient days at our embassy in Constantinople. He made it a point to apologize for his new position, when he met anyone he had served or known before!

One Sunday, Élène received a visit from a friend of hers, a girl who had been at work in a shop till recently, and the girl told us the following tale. With the bad times, the business at which she worked was closed, and "since one must eat," she had accepted a place at the Foreign Ministry —" though I have always



A Revolutionary Street Crowd in Petrograd

worked before in respectable houses! However, now one cannot choose, and they offered me good pay. Also, I am head of a department, which has to do with foreign papers, since I can read and write German, and I had also picked up a little French in the shop, — enough to read and speak it badly. But in that crowd at the ministry my knowledge is precious, and often the men who must write papers in the Russian departments, also come to me, to ask how they must spell a word or form a sentence, because I know more of it than they do. I am very glad now that I went to school, and learned well."

At another ministry, one of the "messengers" was named to the direction of a department, and he, having served for years in that same ministry, realized fully the hopelessness of his position — also the ridiculousness of it. He at once called upon the man whom he was replacing, and the latter received his old messenger kindly. "Well, Peter, and what can I do for you?" the ex-chief asked. "Please, Excellency, I have received so many favors from you in the past; but I am come again to beg help! Will your Excellency do my work, so it shall be well done, for the sake of the ministry? I have been named to your old place. Then we shall divide the pay, and afterward, when there is order again, and these terrible times are over, perhaps your Excellency will remember me and obtain for me my old post of messenger." Everywhere this was the situation, and tales were told, which, when one is no longer in the same atmosphere, seem (even to me) quite unbelievable. At that time they seemed comic enough, though always they held such tragic suggestions.

The base of government upon which everything stood was "Smolny." In the old buildings of the Young Ladies' Institute, founded by Catherine the Great for the education of the daughters of her noblemen, there were held meetings (in continuous session) of disorganized groups of Bolsheviki. Somewhat on the model of the Ukraine's rada it was, but those in Petrograd spent their whole time wrangling and struggling for power, while only giving out proclamations. Each man was doing business for himself alone, without rhyme or reason, and with no result, except the general augmentation of noise and confusion. There one must go, however, to ask for passports, or for anything else, and it was the merest accident as to what reply, if any, one received. Arrested people were taken there, and released or put into prison by the caprice of the particular individual to whom they were handed over, and no one felt safe.

Curiously, protection was given to certain people of the old régime, especially those who at court had belonged to the Occult party. Schéglovitoff, who had been the brains of that clan, and had first occupied the chair of Minister of Justice, then had been made president of the Council of the Empire just before the revolution, was now released from his prison in the fortress, and was invited to take a portfolio in the Bolshevik cabinet. To do him justice, he refused this doubtful honor. Mme. Wiroboff was released, too, and so well furnished with money, that she established herself with more luxury than she ever knew in ancient days. She was, I heard, an intimate friend of Trotzky-Brönstein and the latter's wife, also I was told we should have no difficulty in obtaining

passports, if we addressed ourselves to her. But we did not consider this to be a possible method! General Woyeikoff, and others of the same crowd, were also set free, while special severity was shown towards the old liberals, and the early revolutionists, as well as to the recently arrested provisional ministry. The German occupation was expected soon, and queer stories were afloat of letters, which certain people were receiving, purporting to be from acquaintances they had made years ago in Germany. In these documents their old friends promised protection from all difficulties, once the enemy should be settled among us. I tried to verify some of these letters, as well as the rumors of talks various individuals had with German officers, who were supposedly already in Petrograd disguised. But I never obtained an admission from anyone of his having personally received such a letter, or had such a conversation; and except for the fact that German was often heard openly spoken on the streets, I succeeded in establishing no proof of these rumors. The whole atmosphere was, however, uncanny and tragic to live in.

Perhaps the most deplorable situation was that of the officers, both of the army and navy. They were degraded from their rank, and they walked about minus their epaulets, unpaid, and literally starving. One of the railroad stations wanted to engage a group of them as baggage porters, General Kamaroff tried to take another group to cut the wood for stoves in the public buildings. All this was not allowed. "They are intelligencia, and can use their science, and work with reading and writing, which we cannot do. Let them then do that, and not take the bread from

us poor men," was the reply the rabble government gave in each case. Pensions were abolished for the old and weak and for retired government officials, for all officers both wounded and well, also for every man wearing the St. George's Cross, which decoration had till now carried a small pension with it. This last measure affected many soldiers, which made a beginning of discontent in their circles against the workmen Red Guards who were now on the top of the wave. As to the officers, they and their families were dying of want, when they were not being actually killed by mutinous troops. Some friends of ours picked up a starving officer, who when discovered unconscious on their doorstep had no underclothes beneath his uniform, and he had eaten no food for three days! He had simply tramped the streets looking for any kind of work until he fell. A charming little woman, whom I had known previously, came to me to ask for sewing, and she told me her husband, decorated for bravery and twice wounded, was now without pay, pension, or work. Cases like these could be counted by the thousands; and stories of the torturing and murdering daily of officers on every side were too horrible to relate!

The foreigners were greatly worried. They were not allowed to count on protection in Russia, or on permission to leave. Their situation was certainly most precarious. I heard from all those who met the French (both of the embassy and of the military mission) that they were loud in their complaints and accusations, and in their unconcealed anger against our country, and its people of all classes. The British kept much cooler, though they were even more

harassed than the French were, because Sir George Buchanan with great dignity, but continued determination, had refused to receive Trotzky, or to have anything to do with him, and had refused also the Red Guards which were offered him for the protection of the Embassy. M. Noulens had, on the contrary, had an interview with Trotzky at the French Embassy, and had also accepted from the actual government a guard, which I believe was composed of Polish troops. One day I saw Lady Georgina Buchanan when I went to call, and I found her very anxious, as poor Sir George was ill in bed. She said they were hoping to get away from Russia soon, but as yet they could not obtain permission; and she was quite brave, though naturally extremely indignant at the treatment they were receiving. The Italian Ambassador had long ago fallen ill, and had left Petrograd when the Bolsheviki came into power. Mr. Francis was as usual cheerful and amiable, and deeply interested in the historical situation he lived in, and in a most difficult position, he seemed full of strength and resources. He hoped for the successful interference of the Cossacks, led by Kalédine and Korniloff, and though we were not converted by his optimism, we could not but admire the splendid spirit and fearlessness of the American Ambassador. Once he admitted he was somewhat disappointed in the Russian people, or rather in the use they had made of their great boon of liberty, but this was merely in passing. It evidently never occurred to him to leave his post, whatever came, though he spoke quite frankly of the threats and dangers to which he was constantly subjected. He had refused the guards offered by the

government for the Embassy, while permitting General Judson, head of the military-mission, to accept them for his offices. The ambassador and his secretaries were themselves keeping watch at the Embassy night and day. The Embassy staff equaled their chief in pluck and good spirits, and one was full of admiration for the little group. We personally felt immense gratitude for their many kindnesses in helping us to arrange our departure.

In spite of everyone's predictions we had obtained our passports suddenly. My husband, without trying any byways or protections, intrigues or bribes, had merely spoken with the hotel man who looked after such documents for those living in the house. They had ended by driving together to Smolny one morning, to ask the permission necessary, before applying to the municipal police for passports to go beyond the frontier. At Smolny, where they had been scarcely noticed, a soldier had directed them to a large room, on the door of which they saw written "Passports." Here they had knocked, been admitted, and found themselves opposite a Jewess, who wrote out the application which Cantacuzène had signed. Then she had taken over all our papers of identification and our old passports, saying there would be a reply in three days. We waited five, of which the last two were spent in acute anxiety as to what answer would be given us.

Finally the passport agent returned from Smolny on the fifth day, and came to our rooms at once, saying with what seemed real pleasure, "See, Highness, your papers are all here and in order, and you are the only people to whom permission has been granted. These others are all refusals." And he showed a

large sheaf of papers he carried. Needless to say my husband gave the man a fat tip, but again we could not understand the mystery of our success in these circumstances.

CHAPTER XXI

LAST DAYS IN RUSSIA

After this, we were still in Petrograd about two weeks, till all the formalities of our passports had been gone through. These were most complicated. With Smolny's permission, we claimed and received ordinary passports from the municipality police section, then the general staff, because they did not recognize Smolny, gave us military passports. The fact that America did not recognize the Bolshevik government either, made it necessary for the American Embassy to give us still another set of documents for admission to the United States. Besides all this we had to obtain a visa from the Swedish, Danish and British legations and "control offices." These were finished at last, and we were able to turn to the question of tickets, which came to us through someone's giving up accommodations taken long before; the same luck we had had in the Crimea!

All these various arrangements progressed slowly, and quite frequently we were obliged to change details in our plans. Each time panic seized us, lest everything should fail, or lest, if we stayed too long, the railroad strike, which was daily threatened, should shut us in. My husband's health suffered extremely from the cold. He was on the verge of a nervous breakdown, and I was very weary of the struggle, but each day more than ever I felt convinced we must

and would go somehow, and I was less worried since our first success in obtaining passports.

We gave up the trip we had planned through Siberia and Japan, on account of the cold and disorders on the railroads there; also, because we heard of violent outbreaks along the road in the big cities of the East. Besides a three weeks' trip in such circumstances seemed impossible in my husband's ailing condition. When finally we were sure we should go by the Swedish route, I was greatly relieved. At the last moment the problem of what to do with my jewels became the worst of all, and I grew almost to hate the pretty things I had worn with such delight formerly.

Finally, Cantacuzène left the disposition and hiding of my jewelry to me. I sewed it in my furs and heavier clothes, scattering the latter about in different trunks, with a silent prayer that I was choosing places wisely, where rough soldier hands would not encounter weights or hard surfaces. I also sewed into various stiff collars (of dresses or of coats) a quantity of the old régime five-hundred ruble notes, which according to M. C. . . .'s instructions we had collected. My most valuable stones (pearls and diamonds) I fastened to the inside of my traveling muff and boa, between the fur, which was heavy and stiff, and the cotton stuffing of the linings, where except for a slight addition to the fur's weight they could not be noticed. Some smaller things I put between my hat form and its ribbon trimmings.

With all these placed as they were, I could quite easily undress if necessary, without an appearance of having anything to hide, and without calling attention to the valuables. Michael carried only the sum

allowed, and all our necessary papers, putting them quite visibly in his portfolio, while I had a little money in my purse, so we should not rouse suspicions by seeming too poor. Élène also carried money, and some of my jewels scattered in her small trunk. Cantacuzène had the brilliant idea of calling in the hotel painter, who the day before we left, under our direction, covered over the crowns and monograms on our trunks and bags, with black or white paint, roughly splashed, and who made our belongings look as shabby and smeared as possible.

We wore for the trip clothes which had served till now for hunting and winter sports in the country; and which looked unpretentious, shapeless and somewhat shabby, though they were warm and comfortable. We decided we would thus be quite inconspicuous in the crowd of travelers, and hoped for the best.

At the entrance to Finland our passports fell into the hands of an officer, who by chance had known Cantacuzène in the army, and who took pains to be very polite, and make us no trouble. Several other passengers were stopped and turned back to Petrograd from this station, in spite of their protests. . . . That night in the train we were quiet, and all the next day as well. We heard we were eight hours late, and we wondered what effect it would have on the feelings and the humors of the soldiers who awaited us at the custom house? As we approached the frontier, we noticed the general agitation, and my husband grew feverish, while I felt very cold, somehow. We saw the passengers around us destroying letters and papers, and we did the same, keeping only our documents of identification.

As we reached the station at Tornéo, we realized our train had been very warm and comfortable, for outside in the dark night, the thermometer registered thirty-three degrees below freezing, and it was almost impossible to breathe. When we went into the station, a row of soldiers sat about behind a low counter, on which baggage must be examined. They were looking tired and sleepy, and were dully talking to one another. We preceded the crowd which entered, and there among the men I saw one drowsy, good-natured face which attracted my attention at once. I said to Cantacuzène, "Let us choose that man," and we instantly had our bags carried and laid upon the counter in front of him. He opened Élène's, and finding nothing of interest passed on. I think he judged us poor, and probably without anything worth confiscating in our baggage, we ourselves seemed so shabby. However, he opened one of my bags, and fingered casually a blue serge costume, which he regarded with indifference. He never guessed that under his hand in its high, stiff collar I had sewed five thousand rubles. The other bags were even less exciting, though he did draw a time-table map of Russia from Cantacuzène's, saying if the latter wished to take this with him abroad, he must go with it to the censor. It was offered him as a present since it had lost its use for us. We were leaving Russia, we explained.

In one of my bags the soldier found a few sheets of white writing-paper with their envelopes, and he opened each one of these, holding it to the light, to see that nothing was written thereon. Then he captured a sheet of black tissue paper Élène had laid on top of my dressing gown. This he held up to the

light also with the greatest interest; but when I told him to keep it he put it back with a grunt. We were entirely patient, and encouraged him, saying how well it was to look carefully into everything, and we made as if we would continue opening bags and plaid shawl rolls, till the fellow said it was enough. Then with my best smile, I pointed out our trunks, and asked when I should open those. "You need not do that at all," he answered, amiably enough. "You evidently have nothing of importance or which is forbidden. You are three people, and there are but four trunks." With the weight of my knowledge of all that lay in my trunks (I had jewels, furs, laces, and clothes, also money, and five ancient, valuable oil-paintings — which were heirlooms I had risked saving, by rolling them at the bottom of one trunk) I carried also on my heart a terror of these ruffians, and a fear they would arrest Cantacuzène. Now since we had safely passed this ordeal of the custom-house examination, I began to breathe more normally.

Just then someone spoke to us from behind, in a cordial voice and giving my husband his title, which seemed perhaps a little risky in such circumstances. "Why, Prince, is it really you, and can I do anything to help you? Your passports have just been put into my hands, and I was so glad to get them. Will you present me to your wife?" We turned, and Cantacuzène recognized a young officer he had known at the front. Under fire they had formed a sudden warm acquaintanceship, and my husband was delighted to see the nice young fellow again. He presented him to me, and we were soon chatting casually, and as in ordinary times we gave him some news of Petrograd,

while he told us he had already looked over and stamped our passports, adding: "Now if you are through here with these comrades, you can go on and make your declaration as to money, then continue to the restaurant, and dine there, while the other travelers are struggling through their interrogations." He accompanied us, and we showed what visible money we had, and made our declarations that we carried no gold coin, Russian or foreign. Then we passed into the dining room and ordered a hot supper. I felt ravenous, after the long train trip, and the extreme tension of the last hours. The officer, whom we had invited to join us, came after a little, bringing a colleague, who had also met Cantacuzène somewhere at the front, and soon we were eating gayly and conversing. I noticed at the next table a group of five sailors listening to us with sinister expressions, and extreme attention. One of them turned sidewise, and sat almost touching the back of Cantacuzène's chair, to hear better what the latter was saying of conditions and politics in the south. I signaled, and my husband at once understood and changed the course of his remarks. Instantly the interest of his hearer flagged.

I felt triumphant over our successful passage through the custom house in spite of its dragons. I had always prided myself that no guilt of smuggling on any frontier was mine, but now I had no scruple with reference to the Bolshevik government, and enough was to my credit in that direction during past years to balance the debts of to-night. Besides, we were carrying nothing away of all Cantacuzène's fortune, which lay behind us, confiscated and smoking, an absolute loss.

Having finished supper, we gathered our effects together, and put on our heavy coats; then sending the baggage ahead in one big sleigh, we followed in a second. A low, deep affair it was, with a soft straw cushion, upon which we stretched out, while great carpets were warmly tucked about us. We pulled our furs high over our mouths to breath the cold air through them. One young officer drove with us as far as the passport delivery at the frontier barrier, where a guard-house stood, and where we were told one must get out for a last identification before passing into Sweden.

As the sleigh slowed down, preparing to stop, the officer spoke. "You need not get out," he said. "Here are your passports, Prince, and they are in order. I separated them from the others at the station already, and have kept them for you. Take them and drive on, right through the barrier-gate. I will answer for you." And he stepped off the back of our sleigh and saluted, while our driver whipped the three horses of his troika, and we dashed on over the soft snow, past the barrier, down the river bank and across the ice, climbing rapidly to the other side, with the lights of Haparanda just ahead.

We were in Sweden, and I turned back to look my last at the home-land we were leaving. Three or four hours before, when we had left our train at Tornéo, the sky had been dark and threatening. Now there was a complete transformation, and it was hung with millions of stars, while on the horizon rose high into the heavens, the splendid halo of a magnificent aurora-borealis. Perhaps it was a promise for the future of our unhappy country.

Mysterious as always, Russia stretched out her great plains towards the light, and that was all we could see of her.

Then I faced around again, and I saw the gay lamps of Haparanda station, which we were approaching; and I realized we were out of danger now, and free, though we were refugees in a strange kingdom.

CHAPTER XXII

CONTRASTING PORTRAITS: GRIGORY RASPUTIN AND THE GRAND DUKE NICOLAS NICOLAIOVITCH

Since coming to America, I have been constantly questioned as to the two men who seemingly stood to every one as symbols of the worst and the best in old Russia. By fate they were obliged to live and move on the same stage, playing the villain and the hero in our nation's sad drama. Rasputin's lurid depravity illustrated, in extreme form, every fault in the ancient system of government, and he was the first example of the mentality which triumphs in Russia to-day. He was as much the instrument of the conspirators behind him, as the man of the present "soviet," who is a Bolshevik, is the tool of the infamous Hun, who has formed him to be destructive.

On the other hand, Nicolas Nicolaïovitch was the example of all his nation's qualities. Chivalry lived again in him, and he personified the beautiful side of the autocracy, which had won its greatness through the centuries by wonders of magnificence, protecting patriarchal traditions, and high aspirations and ideals.

In these days of the grim terror at home, Rasputin's counterparts are triumphant, and those who resembled the old chief are crushed in martyrdom. But, finally, some day, with this chapter traversed and ended, Russia must rise again, and it will surely be by the inspira-

tion and work of those among her sons who, like the Grand Duke, kept their faith intact and sacrificed themselves in a white flame of patriotism. Perhaps a century or less may show the world a new Russia, greater than before, strong to hold aloft the torch of Slav civilization, able to efface the memory of these late years of torture and of shame. Foch and his soldiers, with the "Femmes de France," to-day make the world forget the brutal ferocity of Robespierre and the "Dames des Halles" of 1792.

It is but just now that we Russians have quitted the Middle Ages, and while our Grand Duke was of near kin to the old "Knight-of-the-Lion's-Heart," in Rasputin we had our Merlin.

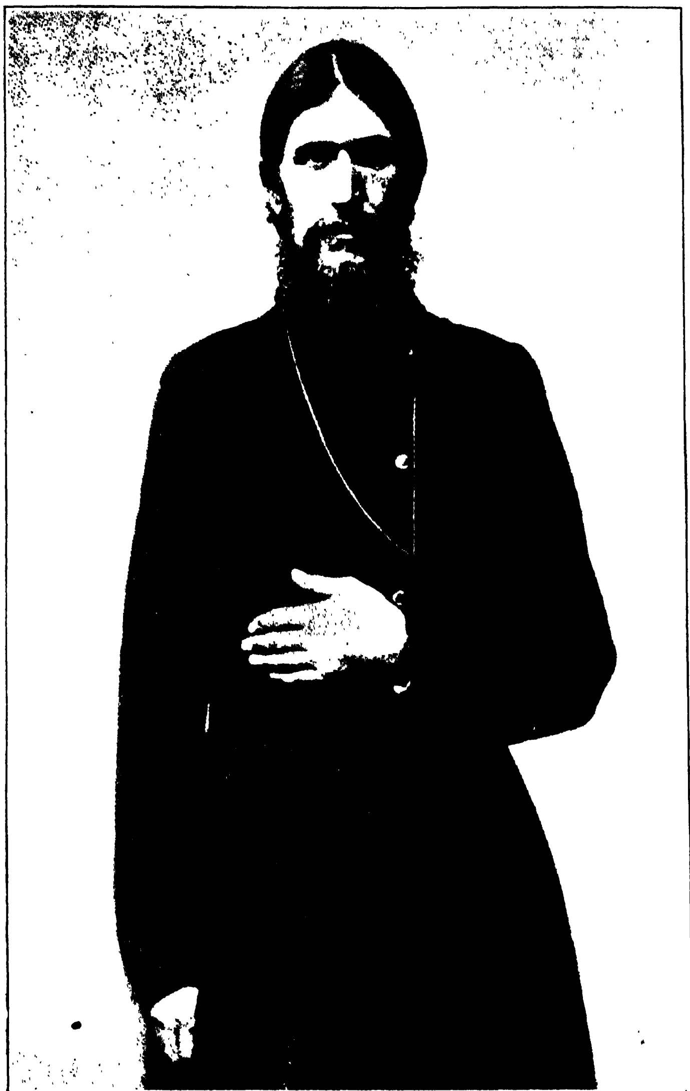
Rasputin

I never saw Rasputin, but constantly during the last years of the Empire, I heard his name connected with the tragic march of fate; and the tales of him came to me at first hand, and from sources entirely worthy of belief. Always there was a repulsive mystery in his slinking back-stairs' ways. One's indignation could not but be aroused by the cynical rapacity with which he and his clan exploited their Imperial patrons. Thinking only of what material gains they themselves could make, the conspirators were busy with the present, and their momentary success blinded them to the fact that their own ruin was wrapped up in our dynasty's. The whole episode of Rasputin's life at court was like some adventure of the Middle Ages, and seemed impossible in the twentieth century.

He came from a Siberian village, so uneducated that

he signed his name with difficulty. Dirty, he made his untidiness a pride, and a proof of his simplicity. A drunkard he was also, and with all the other primitive and bestial vices of the gutter. Seemingly he never desired official rank, nor pompous titles, which wouid have required on his part an effort to appear as others did. He was anxious only for money, for light and noise, for food and drink at all hours, and in vast quantities. Fine clothes of brilliant colors, made in peasant-fashion, he wanted, and he boasted, perhaps untruthfully, that the linen shirts he wore, embroidered in gay designs, were the handiwork of "Sacha," "Anniouta"[1] and others of his clientèle of women. He affected uncouthness, and posed as the simple mujik, using always the familiar "thou" of peasant dialect, and often speaking of himself in the third person. He preached the doctrine that in order to be saved, one must repent; and in order to repent, one must have sinned, therefore, man had been born with the instincts to live and enjoy, and the will to repent and be saved. He and his crowd certainly followed out the first part of this program with conviction and frequency, and the noise of their wild orgies created vast annoyance about the court. Outside of Russia I have heard Rasputin called a priest; but he was never a member of the church. He had been merely a peasant, and once had made a pilgrimage, living in some monastery for a time. Even in his old days in Siberia, however, the group about him had considered him a leader, and formed a small congregation. He was naturally a

[1] "Sasha," familiar Russian shortening of Alexandria, the Empress's name. "Anniouta," pet name for Anna which was Madame Wiroboff's Christian name.



Rasputin

thorn in the side of the Emperor's confessor, a sincere and brilliant man, and a most devout Christian, who was deeply attached to his Sovereign. Rasputin belonged to the sect of the "Hlisti," whose religious rites are in most respects in opposition to the Orthodox. In the opinion of those who closely watched Rasputin's career, the Empress was kept in total ignorance of his worst faults; and she knew him only in his rôle of "seer" and "healer," treating him as a simple apostle, who by his great faith, had become a prophet with powers to guide. Undoubtedly, he was gifted with tremendous hypnotic or magnetic influence, and he was able to help those suffering from some kinds of nervous ailments. All who saw him bear witness to his extraordinary fixity of gaze, and to the uncanny brilliancy of his eyes; and they explained by this trait the power he exerted over so many with whom he came in contact

In Petrograd, as probably had been the case elsewhere before, he also had a following (mainly of women) who found his teachings sympathetic to their own tastes, and who made it convenient to call him "holy." . . . I am certain this foul personage could never have kept his influence at court by himself, and also that he frequently taxed to the utmost the explanatory faculties of the conspirators, who used him as their trump-card. . . . Fairly tall, coarsely built and strong, though thin and rather worn from the life he led, with heavy hair and beard, he dressed in typical peasant fashion, and was a man approaching fifty by his looks, though he was supposed to be much younger. He had no marked features save the piercing eyes, which were the foundation of his fortunes.

The Empress, long ill, was suffering from nervous

pains, which at times caused her great inconvenience. Coming upon her suddenly, they frequently obliged her to give up official engagements, made long before. This illness caused her Majesty much sorrow, and as the difficulty increased, it prostrated her for indefinite periods. Various doctors brought in seemed to do the Imperial patient no good, and under the fire of Madame Wiroboff's criticism the court-physicians were all kept at a distance. Naturally enough various charlatans found their way into the charmed circle of the palace; and Grigory Rasputin in his turn appeared, presented as a man of the people, who knew nothing of medical arts, but who had direct power from Heaven to cure, through his faith and prayer. His talents brought immediate relief, and he was soon taken in hand by Mme. Wiroboff and her crowd, and became their ally. He was admirably adapted to the rôle they made him play, and their machinations were at once disguised behind the mask of "Rasputinism." At first he was kept quite in the background at the palace and only vague tales were told of Mme. Wiroboff's extraordinary protégé. It was seen that through his ministrations the Empress's health and spirits had greatly improved. Then in the spring of 1913, while the court was at Yalta, I heard from several members of the Imperial household that to every one's surprise Rasputin was driving daily with his Imperial Protectress in the park and that he had taken a great hold on her mind. He was "of the people and a saint," she said; and she often talked of her great interest in his ideals. Strangely enough, Mme. Wiroboff showed no jealousy, but encouraged the growing favor of her possible rival. At times she even praised him, and seemed

herself to be on a footing of inexplicable intimacy with the new star. The Emperor was persuaded once to intervene in order to prevent the situation growing ridiculous and after this the Empress drove out alone or with Mme. Wiroboff, but met Rasputin always somewhere in the park, when he climbed into the Imperial carriage. Also, her Majesty met him at Mme. Wiroboff's, and the strange friendship continued.

At this time he began to show pretensions towards various court-officials, issuing orders to those of lower rank, and obtaining favors; while some members of the court showed notes about, incorrectly written on scraps of dirty paper, and bearing the quaint message, that Grigory Rasputin liked them, or approved their acts, " and some day would come to pay a visit to them, but to-day it was impossible for him to do so, as he was engaged in drinking with companions." These amazing documents were always delivered by the hand of a woman-servant, dressed in peasant garb. Naturally, they caused great comment, since very often the receiver had never met Rasputin. Sometimes, they were followed up by the promised visit, but whether by word written or spoken the episode always ended in a request for money. A few officials paid, others refused, all of them talked; and they treated the man as a half-mad scoundrel whom they could afford to laugh at. He was considered a fake whom the Empress had taken up, blinded by her caprice of a day. But people who argued in this manner reckoned without Mme. Wiroboff's talents, and those of her aids at our court. To these plotters Rasputin was a precious factor for the game they meant to play, and they so arranged that his rough manners and acts were accepted as the ways

of a God-inspired, lowly saint, who disdained the arts and complications of court-life, and was near nature. What was not "holy," was made to appear "quaint and amusing." So the rascal remained attractive to his patient, was coached in what he should say or do, was bribed to be presentable when needed, and the inevitable defects of his life were hidden from the Empress. When reports of some particularly wild escapade reached the Emperor or the Empress, and their true well-wishers hoped he would be banished, the whole group of conspirators would at once join forces to persuade their victims that these stories were pure calumny, resulting from jealousy and envy of the natural life to which their patroness chose to addict herself. Her Majesty's loyalty was aroused in the cause of "martyrs," who were being persecuted for their great devotion to her. Of course, informers were then duly and severely punished, and many were the faithful servants of the throne, who were sacrificed in this way.

Then in 1914, came the world war, and in the first months of this time other interests were to the fore; but towards the spring of 1915, it was the influence of the "Rasputinites" which protected General Soukhomlinoff from the accusations of the honest military group and which saved him later also, when he fell, from a vigorous punishment. As I have told, the Grand Duke Nicolas begged, after our army's frightful retreat, that this minister of war should be tried by court-martial, and the disgrace and dismissal of the Grand Duke himself, which followed, with that of Prince Orloff and of various other functionaries sympathetic to them, were all attributed to Rasputin. As time passed, and

his faction waxed stronger (by its members' influence with the Empress, and her own absolute power over her husband), the "Occult" group named and unnamed many ministers, until, finally, they created the disastrous disorganization, and the general insecurity in government circles, which brought on protests from the Duma. The closing of this body early in 1917 was the revolution's beginning. An example of the method used, was in the particularly striking case of General Djounkoffsky (of the Emperor's suite) an incident which we all followed with intense indignation. Rasputin had been for a week's trip to Moscow, where he and a few companions had arranged a supper-party in a private room at one of the big restaurants of that town. Its duration, and the luxury of wine and gypsy bands and chorus were so great, that the following day at the dinner-hour, staid clients of the establishment were thunder-struck by the appearance of Rasputin, hopelessly drunk and completely disrobed, followed by the rest of his friends, also in an irresponsible condition. This arrival of the impossible and noisy crowd in the general dining-room naturally caused a riot; the police were called in, and carried off the disturbers of the peace . . . The court favorite had returned to his home in Petrograd several days late, making vague excuses; but the truth came to the Emperor's ears. General Djounkoffsky was sent to Moscow, quietly to examine the witnesses and the police. He spent two days in investigation, and returned with the report that all the occurrences had been as represented, and he even placed in the Sovereign's hands proofs of the scandal in all its horrid details. The Emperor received and thanked his envoy with his

usual kindly smile, and then the conversation turned to other matters. Every one supposed, and the well-wishers of the crown hoped, that this time the conspirators were really lost, but Rasputin's protection was stronger than they thought; and after two days, without explanation or warning, General Djounkoffsky received official notice that he was deprived of his aiguillettes and dismissed from court. He was allowed no audience for his adieu, had no opportunity for explanation and was vouchsafed no expression of gratitude for his many long years of devoted service. Another case, which made a sensation in our circle, was that of the charming lady who had brought up the four young daughters of the Emperor. It is a fact that this universally esteemed person first protested, and then resigned her post at court, because she was ordered by their mother to admit Rasputin to her charges' apartments, at any time when he thought fit to visit the young Grand Duchesses, for so-called religious teachings. The eldest daughter of the Czar hated the prophet, and also Mme. Wiroboff, to such an extent that a long and mysterious illness she contracted, was attributed to her terror of their constant companionship.

We were told extraordinary tales of the healer's power in curing the heir to the throne, whenever the latter was suffering from his sad chronic trouble. Also, we knew that each time the Emperor was prevailed upon to send away Rasputin, his son immediately sickened and that he only recovered when the banished one returned to the Czarévitch's bedside. The explanation of this strange tale came finally, and was very simple. Whenever her friend was banished,

Mme. Wiroboff and the Persian (Doctor Badmaeff), who was of her band, drugged the boy's food to make him ill, and upon Rasputin's approach this treatment was stopped, whereupon the invalid became normal. Tales of predictions come true, of visions of the past and future, and of magical occurrences, or tricks carried out by Rasputin, Mme. Wiroboff and their confederates, were in constant circulation and seemingly with some foundation of verity, for the man by degrees acquired a place in the Empress's life, which resembled that of a patron-saint, and her Majesty gave him a veneration in which Mme. Wiroboff pretended to share. Thus the licentious, drunken, peasant-charlatan was enshrined by his victim, was fed, paid and kept sober on occasions by his accomplices, and his propensities given full swing between times. Abroad and at home, scurrilous rumors flew from mouth to mouth of his relations with the Empress; but even those at court who regretted her blindness most never for a moment doubted her Majesty's honesty of act and intention, nor her sincere esteem for the man she fancied Rasputin to be. Through his own mystical tendencies, she influenced the Emperor to join in her cult for the false prophet; and as time passed the Sovereigns acted together in the honors they conferred on their chosen advisor. Personally, I am convinced that for many years the Empress had clearly realized what dangers threatened the dynasty, particularly in the period after the Japanese-Russian war. She felt the concessions made by the Emperor in creating a Duma, and promising much more, were fatal weaknesses, for her belief was in an ultra-autocratic régime. Because of his helplessness she did all she could to uphold the Em-

peror and save Russia. In her opinion, this was her mission, and she went about it consistently, trying always to form a stable, conservative party, which would join the crown, the church and the peasants together. Thus she hoped to preserve old conditions, and fight the modern tendencies shown by the Duma, and even the Council-of-the-Empire, by the liberal group of ministers, and by most of the nobility. She was the ally of all retrograde elements in the government, and was happy to think she was in touch with the people through their humble representative whom she kept near her. At the last she was upheld in all these ideas by the mass of letters which, as I have said, each mail brought her, and which purported to be from peasants and soldiers all over Russia, who thanked her for her right understanding of the situation, and of the population's needs. These said that the poor saw the signs of her faith in her aid to the downtrodden all over the country and at the front, and in her keeping near herself the one who was simplest of their class. They added that they knew she honored him in the face of all criticism. Because of her attitude in thus consulting Rasputin on what to do for the nation, and also because of her piety, each letter announced that the poor adored her; and prayed for and with her, that she might be successful in her aims. All these letters were prepared in a department of the Ministry of the Interior, organized by Protopopoff at the first moment when he took possession.

They were sent to his agents at various points all over the empire, to be mailed back to the Empress, who was thus completely his dupe. Protopopoff held the "interior" portfolio from August, 1916, until the

revolution, and he helped her Majesty to sort and file her enormous correspondence. This gave him opportunity to comment favorably upon it, and to encourage her; and together they read many letters to the Emperor, that the latter might be also completely converted to the conspirators' views. This story of the false letters is quite certainly true, and was told me by two of Protopopoff's colleagues in the cabinet during the time the deception was being practised.

Rasputin remained in the background for months after he had begun to play a political rôle, but by degrees, as he grew to realize the value of his collaboration, he insisted upon figuring more often in the plots about him. He kept an apartment in the capital for private life, and for use with his clientèle, but he spent much time in the Tzarskoe palace, and was introduced by degrees to all of its intimate circle. He was never forced on any one by her Majesty, however, and many members of the court knew him by sight only, while those who were less often there had sometimes not even seen him. I was one of these, and I never discovered that I suffered from it in any way. Some few cultivated him for the "protection" it gave them, and this of course immensely flattered his vanity; but as the real power was in other hands, and he was contented with mere appearances, or with material compensations, I do not think such practises bore much fruit. His long train of women disciples, chief among whom were Mme. Wiroboff and her sister, gave him a surfeit of compliments, obedience and adoration, but of the "Occult" party, he was only the standard-bearer. All of his unscrupulous group would have sacrificed and replaced him at any time, if occasion had

made it advantageous to them. On close observation, he never seemed to merit an important place, yet he will undoubtedly go down into history as the spirit of evil, which reigned and triumphed in the last tragic years of the Romanoffs.

During the six months preceding his murder, the liberal ministers all were approached by his agents, and were constantly invited to join the conspirators. An effort was made to tempt some of them, while others were threatened; and in case of rebuff they risked being compromised against their will. Any one who absolutely refused, found himself usually ousted from his place, though there were one or two exceptions to the rule. Those who were openly in opposition to the plotters had constant attacks made upon them. Their footsteps were dogged, their telephones tapped and their letters tampered with. It generally ended by the unfortunate man handing in his resignation, if he was not summarily dismissed, and thus many valuable servants of the throne were sacrificed, while those who remained were under severe nervous tension, which greatly diminished their strength to fight the country's battles. The situation became, by degrees, so impossible, that every right-minded subject felt the only solution to the problem lay in the removal of the "Occult" forces, which were sapping our vitality, exploiting our riches — both in lives and material — ruining our reputation for good faith abroad, and pushing the dynasty toward a dishonorable end. The court was in despair, and the atmosphere was charged with terrible anxiety, when suddenly one day about the middle of December, 1916, it was learned that Rasputin was dead. . . . He was killed by young Prince

Felix Youssoupoff, the husband of the Grand Duke Alexander's daughter. All the horrid details of the plot almost instantly were made public property, and his death had been as foul as his life, it turned out.

It was hoped his disappearance would remedy our ills, by people who knew things superficially; but others, who were wiser in their judgment of the situation, said it was only the beginning of the end, and so it was. Rasputin's death brought revenge from his indignant patroness. Two Grand Dukes were immediately exiled to their estates, and several aristocrats also. All this without trial or question, and more ministers were dismissed, and more resigned. Every sort of repression and retrograde policy was inaugurated. All the world trembled, and the wildest tales were passed about, but no one prophesied the ending in the form it really took. Rasputin dead, his party pushed Protopopoff into his place and the latter immediately saw visions, and made false but useful prophecies. So the conspirators worked on, more violently and openly as the days passed, toward their own and their Imperial victims' ruin. . . . The body of the murdered man was withdrawn from beneath the ice of the Neva River, and was buried in the Imperial park at Tzarskoe, in secret, at the order of her Majesty. One of the first acts of the revolution, was the desecration of this grave, and the corpse was carted hither and thither by a crowd bent on revenge, till finally, by order of some unknown official, it was burned on the roadside and its ashes were scattered to the winds of the highway.

He and his friends had been kept at court by the deluded Empress's faith in their legend that with Ras-

putin's disappearance the dynasty would suffer disaster. I wondered, if in their tragic exile after the first blow fell, the Sovereigns realized how he had abused their confidence, and how ill Rasputin had served them and the country; or did they merely continue to believe in him, and think the absence of their martyred saint from the palace circle had caused a frightful fate immediately to overcome them. It was true that with the death of Rasputin the house of Romanoff tottered, but to all those whose love and service were faithful the tragedy which overcame our Sovereigns was not in their loss of him, but in the appearance of this man at their side. It was he who more than all else, bespattered with mud the proud banner of the Imperial house; and to him and his associates we owe largely the present sufferings of Russia, and the martyrdom of the last of our autocrats.

Nicolas Nicolaivitch

On an early day in spring of the year 1900, a review of the Imperial Guard took place on the "Field of Mars" at St. Petersburg. It was soft weather, with a light breeze; and a brilliant sun shone in a cloudless sky. There were budding leaves on shrubs and trees in the charming "Summer Garden" back of our grandstand loge. Among marble statues and trimmed walks of a century and more ago there stood the small house which had been the first home in these parts of old Czar Peter. Here he lived surrounded by swamps, and here he decided his capital should spring up from them, upon this northern river's bank. He probably dreamed of future splendor, but

he could never have foreseen all that was realized before our dazzled eyes.

We sat in a box, waiting for the pageant of the army he had striven so hard to create. Across the vast drill-grounds rose the empire façades of the Pavlosk regimental barracks. To our right three noble palaces stood, first that of the Princes of Oldendurg, intermarried so long with our Grand Duchesses, that they count themselves belonging to our own Imperial family. The second, a vast red edifice, was the Soltykoffs' home which has supplied great men and beautiful women to Russian history since ancient times, while, lastly, covering a block to itself, shone the "Marble Palace," said to be the most beautiful in all St. Petersburg. It was a love-token from Catherine to her favorite Orloff in olden days; and now was the property of the Grand Duke Constantine. Opposite these three buildings, with their background of river and fortress, the Field of Mars was closed in to our left by a broad canal with the overhanging terraces and parks of two Imperial palaces: that of the unfortunate Paul, which since his assassination had become the government school of engineers and the "Palais-Michel," which rears splendid, classic, white masses above the trees, and contained the museum collections of national art. In such a wonderful frame, the picture must be good to hold its own; and I waited impatiently to see the great sight which I was told the cream of Russia's army would present. For the moment, the space was completely empty just in front of us, save when now and then some good-looking aid-de-camp galloped past, with orders to troops stationed in one or another of the adjacent streets. My party,

more used to all this than I was, were exchanging gossip with many friends scattered in other loges, until every one became serious suddenly, and settled down in their own seats. The commanding generals had taken their places, the Grand Duke Vladimir (son of Alexander II) commander-in-chief of all the guard sitting on horseback at their head. Aids-de-camp galloped harder than ever, signals were given, and the review began. First, came the infantry of the guard, regiment on regiment of fine picked men, all of a size, admirably set up, and marching in such even lines as to seem superhuman in the perfection of their drill. The picturesque variety of uniforms and colors delighted me; especially the high, gilded, empire headdress of the Pavlosk regiment, and their amusing turned-up noses. This regiment, formed by the Emperor Paul, was composed of blond men only and every soldier must have a turned-up nose, because he must resemble the Emperor Paul who founded their unit; while a finer tradition was that they always pass on review with fixed bayonets, lowered as if they were charging, since at some famous battle in their history, they thus carried by storm a victory, of which their Sovereign was proud. Further in the passing lines the magenta shirts, and small, fur-trimmed caps, of the "Imperial Family's Own" battalion, attracted my enthusiasm; and by the time the cavalry approached, I was on tiptoes with excitement.

Heading the cavalry, rode a man for whom a ripple of enthusiastic comment ran through the lines of spectators. Straight as an arrow, he sat his enormous charger, a splendid bay; and from the crown of his round, white furred cap, to the toe of his high-arched

boots, he was every inch the smart and well-groomed soldier; but he looked more than that, as one absorbed details. His head was small and classic, with luminous piercing eyes, and eagle nose, chiseled finely; and while a small, gray, close-clipped mustache and beard covered his mouth and chin, one felt the strength and power in them, which pervaded the man's whole appearance. Every one of the audience about me had a word of admiration as he went by, and, strangely enough, the men were as enthusiastic as the women. Meanwhile, all unconscious, disdaining outside praise or blame, passed Nicolas-Nicolaïovitch, Grand Duke of Russia. . . . I, a stranger, of course, asked all about him, and was told his father had been a soldier, Commander-in-Chief of our armies during the Turkish war, and this the son was preëminently a soldier too. Devoted to his country and his Emperor, he was without pretentions or ambitions other than to excel in his work, and make his command the most perfect of our army. As the splendid Grand Duke passed, he turned out of the line of march and took his place with the reviewing generals just in front of us. There, man and horse became a fixed statue in the moving and fidgety crowd, and while we watched the regiments go by, in the magnificence of their ancient uniforms with golden armor, flying plumes and dolmans, every now and then the eyes of the people would turn to the face of Nicolas, and they remarked, "He is pleased, the men are passing well;" or else, "That is his old regiment, see his pride in it;" "There is a line not straight, the Grand Duke will be disappointed."

First passed the Emperor's escort: Cossacks in Circassian, scarlet dress; all trimmed with golden braid,

and with black fur caps; mounted on pure white horses, with Oriental saddles; truly a splendid sight. These were followed by four regiments in metal armor, worthy of "Lohengrin"; on horses dark-bay, black, chestnut and light-brown, according to the regimental law of each. Then the light cavalry, with hussars looking like empire portraits of Murat at his best; scarlet and gold their uniforms, with much braiding and embroidery, and white dolmans trimmed with sable, hanging from their backs. Great sable caps, with high white plumes. And then lancers and dragoons, with slim lances capped with tiny pennons, and flying plumes of horse-hair in their shining head-gear. The grenadiers with their quaint helmets followed, and the light-horse-artillery going full speed finished the line. All this made a great show; and as they passed, their commander's color mounted, and his eyes flashed. He was congratulated and complimented by those who had looked, and had hoped to criticise, what had proved to be perfection. As the show ended, around the field in a huge crescent the cavalry had formed, and the Grand Duke Nicolas now moved slightly forward. In a ringing voice he gave the command "to charge;" and then he stood his ground, while the earth trembled from the galloping regiments coming towards him. Picked men and horses of all Russia stampeded with wild shouts, but everything was so perfectly measured, and the mounts so well in hand, that they arrived at the same instant, all in their places, and stopped with horses' noses in a perfect semi-circle, within a yard or two of their Imperial commander. It was quite the most splendid sight I ever saw! No wonder my new family had

wished me to see this as one of my first impressions of Russia. If all the beauty and power expressed awakened my high praise, my first sight of the Grand Duke Nicolas left me with an admiration not unmixed with awe for his remarkable personality.

For years after this, however, I saw him rarely, and only heard of his work and life from time to time. He disliked society, and lived in bachelor comfort, in a small palace he had arranged to suit his own taste. When his father had died, he gave his younger brother the lion's share of their inheritance, and took on himself all the debts and obligations of the father's somewhat disorderly past and estates. He had served in the "Hussars of His Majesty" from a lieutenancy upward, and had commanded most efficiently this same regiment, which he adored. Incidentally, he had graduated brilliantly at the officers' war academy, and was, by right of this, a member of the general-staff. He kept out of politics altogether and far from court intrigue, and his time was filled with his military work and with sports. He was counted one of the best shots in the empire, and his borzoi hounds and hunts with them were world-famous. He cared nothing for Paris and its pleasures, which so attracted all our other Grand Dukes; and though there were tales told of his exploits at poker, and his capacity for drink, (also of a romance lasting over years, in which he had shown himself generous and devoted), his horses and hounds, his collections of ancient arms and beautiful glass and porcelain, all old Russian, were his real extravagances. For the rest he went into society only when official etiquette demanded it, and then he made himself so delightful that from various Grand Duchesses down

to the most modest women, society sighed over his calm bearing in spite of its wiles and smiles. His servants loved him, his soldiers adored him, his officers honored him with absolute devotion, and he had warm frank friends and comrades, whom he treated as such, and who in return invariably trusted him. He was in the prime of life, and seemed to have nothing to envy of any one. At court he appeared only when necessary, though he made a second religion of his loyalty, and the throne counted on him for support in difficult times. During the Japanese war, Nicolas-Nicolaïovitch was offered command of all the Imperial army at the front, but he made the condition that if he accepted, he should be given complete power of action and not hampered by orders from the capital. This theory was not admitted, and he refused the proffered honor. With Witte he joined hands only once, to down the intrigue of the German Emperor after peace with Japan, as he did not trust or like Witte's ideas, personally. When, in the first revolution, the Emperor at Tzarskoe was at his wits' ends to choose his course amid much varied advice, the Grand Duke Nicolas was called upon to take command of the corps-of-the-guard quartered in and around the capital. At the first signs of disorder the Grand Duke Vladimir had broken down in health, and taken to his bed, while the troops had completely escaped him. At that moment, all classes were in a fever of anxiety. The Grand Duke Nicolas looked over the situation with comprehension, accepted the trying position offered him, and set to work, calmly acting on the lines dictated to him by his love for the throne, and for the young and helpless Emperor. He refused to mix in

politics, but he quieted the surroundings of the court, inspired every one with courage and confidence and helped each minister to put through any measure he considered good for Russia. The gratitude of the Sovereign knew no bounds, as this help came to him when his ministers and people were all pulling at sixes and sevens. General Dimitry Trépoff had been made dictator in the city, and had inaugurated repressions impossible to continue. Plehve and the Grand Duke Serge were both assassinated. Witte in fear had established himself in the Winter Palace, guarded as in a fortress. All the ministers were planning contradictory programs, and the Emperor was consenting to each one in turn, while Witte was in and out of power with such rapidity that it became a real difficulty to follow his career. Without mixing in all these moves, the Grand Duke steadied things, and he never for a moment showed the least fear or excitement, and by degrees the atmosphere cooled.

In 1906 our Empress was very intimate with Anastasia, Duchess of Leuchtemberg, daughter of the king of Montenegro. The latter had been abandoned since many years by her gay husband, and she had had a struggle to make both ends meet financially, for herself and for her two growing children. During the revolutionary period, the Grand Duke met this lady in the intimate and quiet palace circle at Tzarskoe, to which his duties often called him; and the Empress thinking to help her friend, and to tie the Grand Duke to herself more closely, invented and engineered, first a divorce for the Duchess Anastasia, then a marriage betwen her and the Grand Duke. His friends were at first annoyed by the match; but afterwards became

quite reconciled, for the new Grand Duchess venerated her husband, and he seemed to find great comfort in her sympathy and companionship through all the years to follow. She cared as little for society as he and his old friends sufficed her. Once, in speaking of this, she said to me: "When any one has been as unhappy as I, she is glad to have a home with a kind husband, and to be quiet; and neither the Grand Duke nor I need amusement or noise; also, we dislike greatly going out." But noise they had, as the years passed, for so marked a personality as the Grand Duke became, was necessarily pushed forward by every event of the period. He was persona grata with the Emperor, so, naturally, all the ministers tried to win him over to their theories. It was marvelous how he kept free of traps and intrigues. Foreign diplomats made up to him at the club, the military looked up to him as to some one very sure, the Imperial family counted on him when in trouble, though many members tried to undermine his influence with the Emperor, at other times, this in a wish to tear him down and replace him themselves. Avoiding all but the most official entertainments still, keeping his warm intimate circle closely about him, throwing himself into his work with all his heart, by degrees outgrowing the exploits which in old times had been told in lowered voices, the Grand Duke became a larger and more luminous star with each year in the constellation of the Russian capital; and was soon a force to be reckoned with. It was just before the time of his marriage, that my husband was named to his staff, and we heard this was done because the Grand Duke wanted near him a representative Chevalier Guard, and had been told of Michael,

first by a member of his own court, then by the commander of our regiment. From their first meeting, my husband gave his chief a whole-hearted devotion, which never wavered through all their long relations. The Grand Duke had a sunny charm, which won immediate allegiance, and he knew the secret of true friendship and companionship, without ever lacking dignity. He seemed to consider his position with others depended, not on the accident of birth and fortune, but only on the superiority of his capacities, if he made good. So he proceeded to do this in every line of his work or pleasure, carrying his success with utmost modesty and simplicity.

There existed a legend, which was handed about, as to the Grand Duke's violent temper; but in the ten or more years I knew him, it was certainly under perfect control, and I never heard of a case in which he lost it. He had severe words and just punishment for officers under him, who neglected their duty to their country or their men; and he had no use for any one not honest and courageous; but he was always full of understanding, ever helpful and generous to those in trouble, and as loyal to those below as to the Sovereign over him, ready to assume responsibility and to uphold any lost cause, if he thought it a right one. While not a man to turn many compliments, nor to carry on empty conversation if he could avoid it, he was neither taciturn nor inert at a party, and he had a trick of voice and manner and of smile, which made those about him feel individually flattered by what seemed to be his entire attention. To his wife he was a most indulgent husband, and he cared for her children with never ceasing kindness. All children went to him

immediately with confidence, all dogs at sight fawned on him, and men and women paid him the invariable tribute of instinctively ceding him first place. To look at, he was large and splendid, and high-bred, and with the years and the weight of life, in body, in mind and in heart he grew nearer perfection, until he seemed the personification of all that was best in the traditions and nature of the great Slav autocracy. As time passed, the Emperor loved him, and leaned upon him, more and more. The rest of the Imperial family gave up trying to rival him, and though some still envied his place, they all sought his advice and protection. The government officials respected him greatly, and desired his help on all great occasions; and while society admired him, the army adored their magnificent chief. Meanwhile, the Empress and the Grand Duchess had fallen out, and the Empress, seeing no good in the Grand Duke, viewed his influence on the sovereign with avowed distaste.

During some years before the recent war, especially after he had once spent an autumn as guest of William II at the German manœuvres, the *Grand Duke held and maintained, that there would soon be war with Germany, by William's intentional seeking,* and he preached to our Emperor, to the war ministry and to the general-staff preparedness, heavy armaments, the building of defenses and of railroads, the creating of reserves of ammunition and of grain, and of all other provisions which would be useful in the crisis. He did not cry all this on the house-tops, nor create ill-feeling, since he did not desire war; but I heard of it from indignant members of the Imperial family, who had other views on the spending of Russia's rev-

enues. Also from ministers who wished to preach economy for their own glory, or who dreamt of an alliance with the Germans. Officers told sometimes of the great care the Grand Duke was taking to have at least our man-power ready, and possessed of all the efficiency which depended upon him; ready for the moment when a sudden call should come. And when at the end of July, 1914, his prophecy came true, the command of Nicolas-Nicolaïovitch was the first to be sent to the frontier, where it entered East Prussia a few days after the declaration of war. This corps of the Imperial guard, composed of picked men, officered by the cream of the nobility, gave a good account of itself all through the war; but especially did its work count, when while all the world was preparing, it formed the backbone of our army, which by threatening Berlin, saved Paris from the Huns.

The Grand Duke saw his troops go, leaving him behind, apparently deprived of their command, without a murmur; and he told my husband good-by, with the words that he envied him, and hoped very much he in turn would be granted the favor he had asked of his Sovereign, namely, to be given a cavalry corps on the firing line. For a few days his request remained unanswered, as I have told. Then the Emperor sent for him, and offered him the supreme command of all the Imperial armies! It was a splendid recognition of his service and capacity, but a heavy weight of responsibility as well. Those who were with him at the time, said the Grand Duke was immensely surprised, and filled with emotion; but quiet as usual he accepted without hesitation, and in a few grateful

words. He asked to go to the front soon, and with as little noise as possible; also he begged to choose his own staff. The first request was granted, and the second one refused, for Soukhomlinoff had already seen to it that the collaborators of the man he envied and hated, should be of his own choice; and should be officers whom the Grand Duke knew little, if at all.

The Generalissimo accepted even these difficulties, and shouldered the heavy burden of supreme command, knowing better than any one else our lack of preparation, ammunition, and big cannon. I think his faith, both in Providence and in our people, must have been very great; and at this time he was certainly a Russian among Russians, loving his country and his race, as he believed in them with intense fervor and simplicity. The day the war clouds first darkened our horizon, July 25th, I saw the Grand Duke seated next to the still unconscious Emperor, at the military theater in our Kracnoe camp. The old man watched his Sovereign all that evening with a yearning, protective face; evidently fearing for him the heavy blow which was so soon to fall on the gentle, pleasant master of all the Russias. On the first of August, I saw them again, side by side upon their knees, at the great historic Te Deum in the Winter Palace. Nicolas, the autocrat, was still quiet, as always, but the pleasure was gone from his face, and he was very pale with troubled eyes, dumb with wonder and anxiety perhaps, as he held his head bowed in prayer. Nicolas, the Grand Duke, knelt by him, even thus towering with his shoulders above the multitude. His head thrown back, his silvered hair catching the light of sun and candles,

eyes flashing, nostrils distended, and his mouth drawn into a straight hard line, his whole figure showed the same training and power to command himself and others, as when I had first seen him nearly fifteen years before; and his look of exaltation was that of a crusader, ready to do or die in a great cause. Every one spoke of him afterwards, both as he had looked when kneeling before us, and as when he rose and stood a moment facing the crowd, and then departed, following the Sovereigns from the great hall. He drew all eyes, and held them, and he left the men somewhat surprised at the special cheers they had spontaneously given him; but they were full of confidence since our nation's fate was in the hands of so strong a man.

Then he disappeared from among us and went to his work without another sign. He had able helpers, and the campaigns planned were carried out with complete success; he was promised supplies, which were to be bought or produced in quantities and rapidly. Soukhomlinoff promised, and the Emperor swore to keep the war minister to his word, if the Grand Duke would but push on. The Allies begged us to make our invasion, or France would fall while Great Britain still prepared. Trusting to the Sovereign for Soukhomlinoff's share in the action, our Grand Duke's army took East Prussia first, then Poland nearly to Cracow, and Galicia and the Carpathians, and made excursions into Hungary, almost to the doors of Budapest. While this was doing through eight months, my husband was convalescing at his ex-Chief's staff. There at Baranovitch, Michael lived near the Grand Duke, day in day out, watching the

great commander, and my husband's letters were full of the older man's ardent personality. A sportsman's tastes and habits were entirely laid aside, forgotten, and the clear ruddy skin wrinkled and grew pale from tension and from lack of air. The envious in Petrograd were whispering, that the commander of the armies knew nothing of war, and had but luck and a fine staff of officers in his favor; and that all these latter had been chosen by the able war minister. The Chief worked daily from early morning until dinner with the staff members; he followed and knew every detail of every plan, approving or vetoing; and often he worked afterwards late into the night at his own desk. Personally he saw and talked with hundreds of visitors sent him by the Allies, with whom he decided the handling of the war; and he also received on business all the cabinet ministers, and all officers with reports or suggestions as to the great campaigns in progress. Whether the Grand Duke had or had not real military genius has been much discussed. Certainly he possessed the force, intelligence and magnetism to inspire those about him to do marvels, and to win to his opinions all those who were placed near him, even by the hands of his enemies; also to calm the fears and arouse the courage of those who came to Baranovitch with faint hearts. It was said by his foes at court, that the Grand Duke did none of the ordering of the war, and they gave credit for everything good to General Ianouschkévitch. But those who saw him at headquarters all concur in saying that no plan was made without the supreme commander's careful thought and study going into it, that he signed no paper in ignorance of its contents, that he invari-

ably drew the best from those whom he consulted, while he gave them also much in return and, finally, that he always kept to himself the responsibility, and offered them the praise when all went well. His papers, reports and speeches were models of clear brevity and dignity, and of those letters and addresses which were impromptu connoisseurs are untiring in their admiration. So though the military work of the war was done in collaboration with a brilliant staff, the Grand Duke held them by his own capacities, and won their absolute devotion and their unstinted respect. He had an instinct which amounted to genius, for the act or the word fitting the moment. He never had to think out what he must do, and he never seemed to make a mistake. He had "tact from the heart," as the Russians say. Life at the staff was simple and austere; gambling and drinking were tabooed, and no ladies allowed at headquarters; and his officers in a desire to spare his nerves avoided all the bickerings and small troubles, which occur in most such groups. Foreigners attached to the staff were greatly impressed by its serious tone, and were greatly bored, as were also our own younger officers, since they found nothing to do when they were off duty. But in spite of this, one and all paid tribute to the Chief, and spoke of his self-control on days when the news was not good, of his constant work, and his intense belief in the good cause, and in those who worked to help it; also of the extreme charm of his personality and of his affability, and modesty of word and act. To his credit was laid the upholding of all that was best in our home government, such as the measures for the abolition of vodka, the proclamation of Polish

autonomy, and the continual sustaining of a concerted and inter-allied action on the battle-fronts, and in economic and administrative spheres as well.

As winter and the campaign progressed, we ran shorter and shorter of ammunition, and often the telegrams brought anxious news to the great staff-headquarters. Necessarily the Grand Duke slowed up the struggle, though he knew it was giving the enemy a better chance against us. Things were like this, when he decided to play his last trump card, and try to drive home in the Emperor's mind our dire need of war supplies. His Majesty should take a trip into the new provinces we had just conquered, and see them for himself; also he should show himself to their peoples, and to the troops along those lines. It would impress the Sovereign with how fine were these new jewels added to his crown, and make him want to uphold his armies' effort by hurrying forward the much needed ammunition. Perfectly delighted with the idea, the Emperor came to the staff, where he picked up the Commander-in-Chief and from there they journeyed along the front, out into the conquered provinces and cities, acclaimed by the soldiers and the populace. They visited Lvoff, and the great fortress of Pérémoesyl and the master of all this territory was made to feel a pride in them. The Grand Duke, who had avoided through tactful loyalty going into the conquered country alone, now accompanied the Sovereign, explaining, commenting, describing, unwearied always. He showed the triumphs, pointed out the difficulties, marked the great needs of the weeks to come. It was amazing to all those, who like my husband, formed the group about these two

personalities, how the old Chief stood aside on all occasions, even from his place of supreme military-commander, how he handed reports to the Emperor, putting the latter into his own place, while he himself remained merely in attendance. Also they noticed how, in spite of this extreme tact and modesty, the Grand Duke was recognized and cheered by his troops, and was turned to by officers and civilian-officials alike; how he was leaned on even by his Imperial cousin, who could not do enough to show his good-humor and his gratitude. After this trip, the Emperor, by way of thanks, bestowed on our Chief a diamond mounted sword of great beauty, and he greatly touched the Grand Duke by promising his complete adhesion to the latter's war-plans, and his help in the organization of transportation, and in getting ammunition. When his Majesty departed, he left hope blossoming again in the Grand Duke's heart. . . . Meantime, through the months of the long winter the old Chief had become the idol of all Russia. A car full of icons, crosses, and religious images had by degrees been sent, or brought to him, by deputations of poor peasants, or from towns, and cities, and organizations; and when all these people were received by him, and spoken to kindly, and when they saw his Imperial Highness in all the glory of his strength, they carried back to their homes everywhere in the country, story and legend of the wonders of his staff, its hard-working life, and the perfect order which reigned there; and most of all they said they had been well-treated, made to feel welcome, and that the Grand Duke had spoken to them, and told them he was grateful for their encouragement and confidence. He, on his side, was

greatly touched by the demonstrations of appreciation, and gradually it had come to pass that Nicolas-Nicolaïovitch was fondly thought of, and was prayed for in far-off cabins and in palaces, where his portrait (whether in large photograph or simple postcard) hung on the wall. All this was told in whispers at the Tzarskoe palace, and more than ever he was envied and feared.

As I have said, Soukhomlinoff did not keep his promises, but he remained in power in spite of this, and as spring progressed and opened into summer, the Germans sent their best troops to reinforce the slack Austrians and take the offensive, and on all our fronts our armies commenced slowly but surely to move back. Russia's martyrdom began and the Grand Duke, during those weeks, ascended all the stages of a painful Calvary. Every inch of ground was fought for, while little by little our newly conquered territories were taken from us, and then much of our own land as well. The army, with grim determination and admirable discipline, retired with never a rout, and never once turning their backs on the pursuing enemy. As they retreated, the soldiers set fire to railroads and fields, villages and chateaux, towns and factories, which were systematically destroyed in the face of the enemy, so that he reaped no advantage he could make use of. Almost with bare hands counter-attacks were made; and the more stubborn and patient was our men's resistance as the enemy pressed harder. Back of the army an avalanche of refugees poured into the center of Russia, all along the line clogging transportation, using provisions, dying of misery, and carrying disorganization far back into the country; and be-

hind them again stood the whole of Russia in dismay, making desperate efforts to meet the new perils and grave troubles which each day put upon our shoulders. Sheer strength of our national manhood, and of our womanhood as well, and sublime trust in Providence with confidence in the old Grand Duke, carried Russia calmly through that epoch. We dreaded to read the papers, and to see how with each day the tide of invaders came nearer to us. At the staff the watchers scarcely slept, the Grand Duke lost many pounds and grew gray of face, and white of hair; but he never once bent, and never lost his hold upon himself. His best efforts were, as before, expended in the intense labor in his office; where, after the day's work was done, he sat on with a few picked officers pouring over the possibilities and trying to devise some means of saving cities and armies with the least expense of life. From these conferences he came back, haggard and old looking, though still unbroken. In such terrible times he won all the hearts about him, and even the men only recently sent by Soukhomlinoff were drawn to their commander as they were not meant to be. Temptations also came to the Chief, for a party rose up in anger against the court conspirators, blaming them loudly, and tried to get the Grand Duke to join them, pointing out what harm the Rasputinites were doing him through jealousy besides ruining the country. From Moscow came deputies representing a serious element there, who begged our Chief to seize the Imperial crown, and to lead Russia towards victory and liberal civilization, but the Grand Duke, with all his energy, refused to be disloyal; and he preached to these men that our people must unite now only the

more closely around their rightful Emperor, and free him from the misery, which the enemy was bringing upon the country and the throne. He found words of warning for the Sovereign too, it was said, and he made such accusations against Soukhomlinoff that the latter's trial and execution were demanded hotly. This was all he could do, as he served his Sovereign with religious devotion, and he felt he could not resign for his own vindication, when the Emperor, the army and whole nation were in such danger. His partisans thought their chief quixotic, but they worshipped him the more for his complete forgetfulness of self. Only too well the Grand Duke knew of the happenings at court, of the slow process of his ruin being planned, and carried out, by the conspirators; but he disdained all measures of defense. If his work and service for years did not speak for him, no mere words could prove his loyalty, so he would do nothing but go on working to the end, and leave the intrigues to react on their own inventors. Much see-sawing, and the treacherous minister-of-war was finally changed, though he kept all his official honors by the Empress's protection. . . . I admit I personally took great pleasure in seeing Soukhomlinoff and his wife just before the former's dismissal stand entirely alone and deserted through a whole evening at a great charity fête at which the cabinet, the court, society and even many army officers were present. The demonstration was so marked as to be painfully humiliating to the traitors, and though it was their only punishment for their sins during many months, it was something. . . . A moment's renewed hope came to the Grand Duke, after Soukhomlinoff's discharge; but he soon realized he

would pay dearly for this small success vouchsafed him. The Chief wrote to his wife, who told me of it, he knew his own hours at the staff were numbered. He said he felt that he had done his share, and must await his fate in patience, consoled by his conscience being at peace, since he had lived up to his duty as he saw it. When the Emperor's message dismissing the Grand Duke reached headquarters, the latter was not surprised, and seemingly not broken-hearted, as were those surrounding him. He was glad to lay down the strain of his great situation, and to take a smaller place; especially if by doing so, he would be bettering matters for Russia. In his modesty he had never believed he was the only man who could head our armies successfully.

Polivanoff, the new minister-of-war, came to headquarters with the Imperial message; and at once the Grand Duke ceased to give orders or receive reports. Confusion resulted, of course, as now everything must go over wires to Petrograd, and to the Tzarskoe palace, where the Sovereign — in the midst of his preparations for leaving the home-duties, and without special knowledge of what had happened at the front — found himself unable to make any decisions. Finally, the Emperor telegraphed the Grand Duke to take back all his duties again till his Majesty was able to join him. This was done by the Chief with quiet ease and dignity, and all went smoothly for ten days or more, while the Sovereign was awaited. General Ianouschkévitch, who had been made chief-of-staff without the Grand Duke's knowledge or consent, came to the Chief now, and begged most earnestly to be

allowed to follow him to Tiflis, and to act there in the same capacity for the Caucasian front, as he had acted for all the fronts till now. He argued that he could not bring himself to continue his work at Baranovitch after all he had seen and knew. The old Grand Duke, much touched by this act, which meant to his chief-of-staff moving downward and into practical exile as well (when he might have remained on and worked under the Emperor's own eyes) decided to accept the sacrifice. Then, one by one, each of his aids came to him, with the same petition: might they also accompany their Chief, whom they felt deserved now more than ever, their admiration. And to them also, he promised to take them with him, since they had been attached always to his person, and not to the working staff of the military offices; but when in turn, these were followed by deputations of the clerks, typewriters, mapmakers, and all the general staff personnel, the Chief, with a voice full of emotion, made them a little speech. Only a few words, in which he thanked them, "his children," for their proved value in service, and their loyalty to him; but he told them, how in this dark hour of trouble for Russia it was especially necessary for every man to do his duty, wherever he was put. It was not a time for individual feelings or ambitions; therefore just as he must serve the Emperor by going to the Caucasian front, they must do so by staying where they were, and as a final thought he added, "I expect each one of you to do your duty to those who may follow me here, as well as you have done it toward me; and you must do me honor by being loyal and patriotic always." They all wept, and knelt to him, and he embraced them, in

sheer gratitude for the balm they poured on his heart. By no chance in these hard ten days was a single word of complaint drawn from the brave old man!

When the Emperor came, the Grand Duke met him as of old, with the same calm show of ready respect, and the same dignity. The younger man, surrounded by his court, felt suddenly intimidated as he saw his elder cousin, and in spite of his best effort he could not hide this embarrassment. Forty-eight hours they remained together, in constant conference, the Grand Duke's armor of patience unmarred, the Emperor nervously questioning, or listening to explanations, and talking much to cover his evident agitation. It was the ex-Commander-in-Chief who encouraged his Majesty toward the end; and who seemed to uphold the latter's failing determination. With pale face and troubled eyes Nicolas II watched the leave-takings of his great cousin from all who had worked under him, through a year past. The staff showed quite openly their immense love and distress, and the ex-Commander, with his proud beauty of eye and smile, thanked and blessed them paternally.

He had stood the test of six months of vast triumph and six months of slow defeat, facing the Germans before, and the home-enemies behind, and though officially disgraced and going into exile, he was decidedly the hero still. As he stood on his train platform, much older looking for his year at the staff, but noble, and as ever towering above all littleness of a world which could not bow his head, he said good-by to the Sovereign and wished him well, and then waited standing at salute, while his train drew off, carrying him to new destinies. He, with others, saw the Emperor step

forward at the last moment, as if to make a sign of recall; but then without the gesture Nicolas II gazed until the train went out of sight, while the Grand Duke, with a sigh, turned to his compartment in the car and shut the door.

These details were told me by one of his aides-de-camp, who said there had been no dry eyes among the members of his suite, as the old Chief had disappeared.

In the Caucasus, where the Grand Duke took command in September, 1915, there were at once signal military victories on the firing line. He had been given the title of "viceroy," and the civil as well as the military administration had been put upon him. Trébizond and Ezeroum were both taken, and large tracts of Asia Minor quickly fell into Russian hands. The civil government was found to be in great disorder, and combined with the other war difficulties it was found almost impossible to prevent the strife of the different half-civilized clans in a country, where endless jealousy of race or tribe always had existed. But in the eighteen months while he was there, the Grand Duke found his way to the warm hearts of all these southern peoples. He adopted their national dress, and received all who came to him with his habitual affability, and soon the Caucasus rang loud in its praise of him. Echoes of all this reached Petrograd, and as usual created comment in palace circles. It was announced he was making propaganda with the Circassians now, as before with the soldiers, and tales of riotous living in Tiflis were zealously circulated. Spies were even sent south, with orders to find some act or word, on which an accusation might be hung. It was of no avail, for the Grand Duke was

the same figure as ever, and life in the Tiflis palace was so unpretentious that all criticism fell flat. There was nothing but a quiet family circle, for the Grand Duchess had joined her husband and now and then they received officially the various people, whom they were obliged to see. Even so, their entertainment retained the quiet aspect appropriate to war times.

The revolution found the Chief at Tiflis still, and prepared long since for the tempest which he had predicted. Of course, his provincial capital echoed the general noise and action; but he had taken wise measures at once, and in the national earthquake which overthrew autocracy, the Grand Duke's palace was respected, and his person was acclaimed. After the Emperor's abdication, a telegram was received by Nicolas-Nicolaïovitch, signed by Prince Lvoff, head of the new "provisional government," asking the Grand Duke to take command again of Russia's armies. Without hesitation the Chief accepted this invitation to renew his burden; and he departed for the staff, to the great regret of all Tiflis. At Moghileff the Chief on his arrival had a new blow to face. . . . In the few days since the abdication, and while he had been traveling, there was already time for the provisional ministry at Petrograd (which had taken over the power with conservative ambitions) to be forced in to a path directed toward Socialism; and though Prince Lvoff had invited the Grand Duke's coöperation in good faith, he was obliged now to prevent a Romanoff being at the head of the army. It was a difficult and delicate task for the Prime Minister's representatives to explain to the man they had invited to the staff, that though he had been called, he was no longer

wanted. The messenger sent to meet the Grand Duke was greatly intimidated by his mission. It was the Chief himself who helped clear up the situation. Having instantly understood, he acted with equal promptness, and made everything easy sailing for the government's deputies, as well as for himself. He kept his usual tone, and decided to retire at once to his home in the Crimea, dismissing his aids and court. They one and all begged to remain near him; but he would not hear of this, and sent them to Petrograd to take service with the new government, thanking them for their past devotion. From the staff-headquarters south to Sebastopol, the Duma deputies — who had imagined they were going to conduct into exile a broken scion of the Imperial house — found themselves the unknown attendants of a great national hero; for the Grand Duke's trip was a long unbroken triumph; and as his special train drew into each station, crowds, gone wild with enthusiasm, clamored and cheered, shouting and begging him to but show himself. Once he did this, and the people went mad to such an extent that he never repeated the experience; fearing the scenes might cause political complications or that there might be rumors started of a counter-revolution attempted by him.

He reached his Crimean home in safety, and found "Tchaire," with its phenomenal beauty of sea and sky and vegetation, an earthly paradise and a safe retreat in these early days of spring. There I saw the Grand Ducal group settle into a most modest life, on the smallest of incomes. At first, they were given complete freedom, and later, though more and more restricted both as to money and personal liberty, through

many months the Grand Duke remained personally unmolested. He imposed on all those about him, even on the rough sailor-Bolsheviki, who once or twice came to raid the Imperial villa. He was more and more broken in health, however, often suffering with sciatica, and he had grown very thin and fragile looking; but the ardent spirit never gave way, and though a wounded lion, he was still a king among his kind. The countryside all watched the high roads, to see if by chance the tall fine figure, so well known to it, and which every one saluted, would not pass by. But the refugee scarcely ever left his house and garden, at first from taste, and then because he was held a prisoner within those limits. Occasionally some one was allowed to visit the old Chief, a relative, or a civilian; and these brought back reports of the simple, restrained, sad life of the villa. They said that when not ill, the Grand Duke had taken to writing for distraction; but he was as kindly as ever to those about him, and he seemed as great in his captivity as in his days of power. Should he be free, would he leave Russia? he was asked. And he had answered no; he had always loved his country, and had never lived abroad; and he meant to remain among his people till the end. He was optimistic for the future of the country; if not under this first government, then under some one of those which would follow; but he felt there must be a crisis, and much misery, before a new day would dawn. Every one must keep faith, however, and do their duty; for, as always, things were very simple to his mind.

People abroad have wondered why the Grand Duke Nicolas did not arrest the Emperor, and seize the crown, in the early days of 1915, when things were

going radically wrong, and why he never made a counter-revolution, after March, 1917. To those who knew him well, such acts are impossible to associate with the thought of him, for he was loyalty personified, and the idea of overthrowing his Sovereign, and stepping into the latter's place would have revolted him as blasphemy. Since the revolution, as always, he was quite unambitious for personal glory, power or success; he was no longer young either and to cause bloodshed, or renewed difficulties, by another political movement, did not tempt him. . . . In his place at the head of our armies, Nicolas-Nicolaïovitch would undoubtedly have stood at his Emperor's side through everything; and he would have given his last drop of blood to save his cousin's throne. But unfortunately for the latter, when the revolution came the old Chief had been banished, and was too far away to be of use in the Imperial cause. Since then, typically Slav, he was something of a fatalist, and he was liberal-minded also, and quite as unambitious as before. So he accepted his personal fate quietly, and went into retirement; where he has remained, as at the zenith of his glory, the incarnation of all that was best, most brilliant and noble, in Russia's old régime. He is now about sixty, and sits waiting for the freedom he has lost; or for death at the hands of his Bolshevik jailers, any time they may choose to murder him.

So far they have regarded him with respect akin to awe. Perhaps in recompense for all his sufferings, he will be spared to see the dawn of a new day — even to take part again in the national life of the country he fought so well to save from German hands. . . .

Whatever befalls, the name and face of the Grand Duke Nicolas, will be enshrined, above all others, in the hearts of those who knew him, and who learned from him the meaning of true patriotism.

THE END

